



ANTILLEN REVIEW

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The new geopolitics

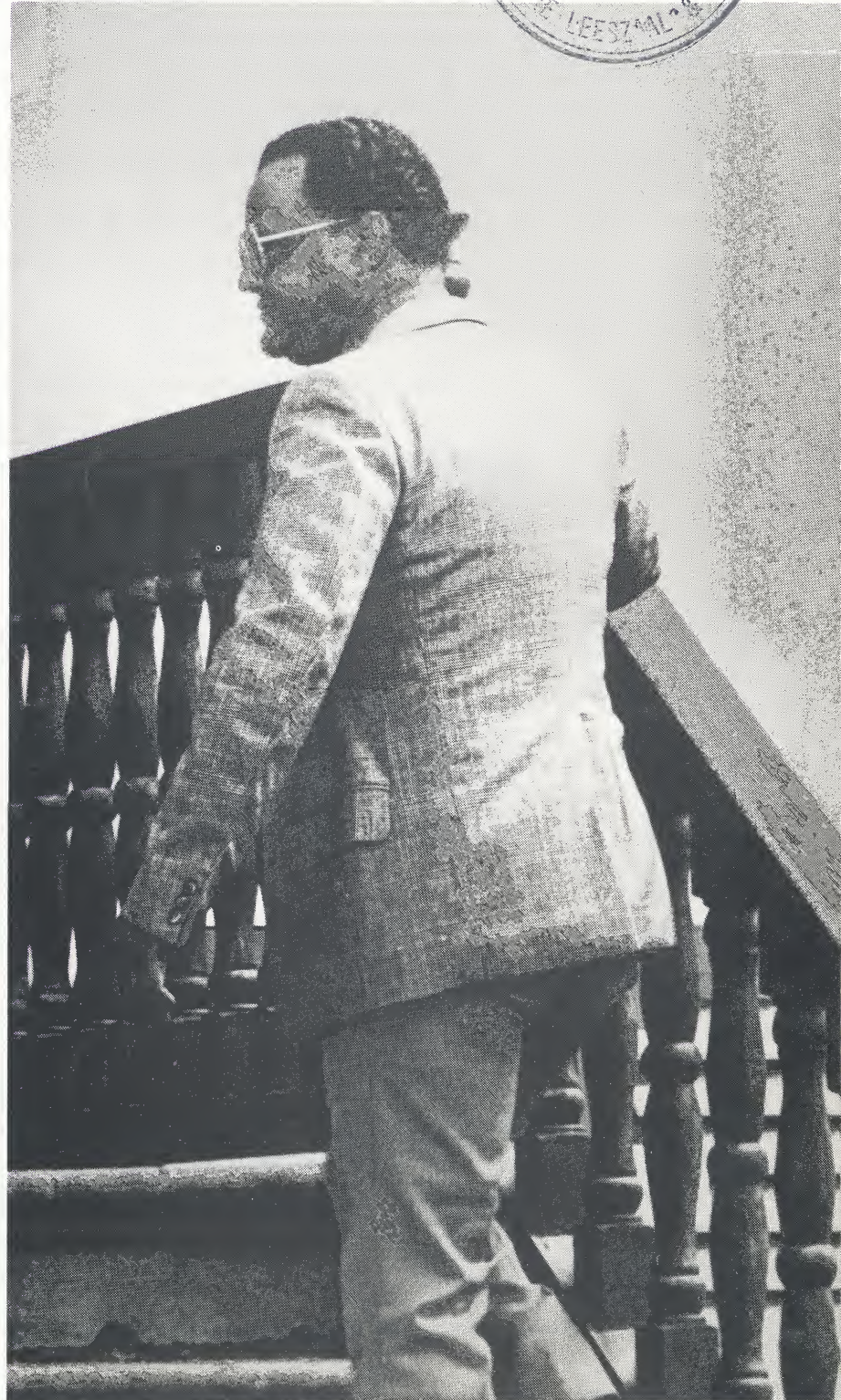
Offshore business

Fourth Estate

**Troubled Cruise
business**

**Ernesto Rozenstand
and the Aruban
Theatre**

**Code of medical
ethics**



Promise of constructive government

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FROM THE EDITOR

'Identities in politics', Theodore H. White once wrote, 'are connected far more to ideas than to ego, to id, or to glands. At the core of every great political identity lays an idea — an idea imposed on the leader from his past, which the leader absorbs, changes and then imposes on the others outside — ideas are the beginning of politics'.

Thus the question should be raised what ideas move our leaders of today. A question, which begets a ring of urgency in post-election days and sadly even more so because ideas, great inspiring concepts and broad visions have become scarce in our time. Or maybe nearer to the truth because they are not heard, obsessed as our screen-addicted society is with images, semblances and reflections. Not the challenge of the imperfect real but the reassurance of perfect showmanship has captivated the modern mind. Political leaders are being 'made' and the product is euphemistically called charismatic. But no future will emanate from emptiness. Creation 'ex nihilo' is after all the

prerogative of the Lord God only. If ideas are the beginning of politics it is ideas that we should look and search for.

Moving into a period of constitutional decision-making there should first of all be a sharing of vision. Now that the electorate has spoken its mind — in fact has confirmed its choice of two years ago — politics should rise above the dimension of campaigning and engender a discussion of fundamentals.

The basic question of where the balance lies between the legitimate desire for 'Antilleanization' and the demands of common sense urgently needs to be given attention.

The answers given will direct the constitutional debate, educational and linguistic policy, as well as the determination of economic and cultural priorities. Also the Antilles identity is connected far more to ideas than to ego, to id, or to glands!

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Promise of constructive government

A Post Election Analysis

The outcome of the June elections was a disappointment to but a few and an excitement to even less. So little was the political picture altered that many felt the whole exercise to have been superfluous. The most heard comment during those first anticlimatic days was 'nothing has changed'. History may prove these seemingly obvious observations to be fundamentally wrong. For the results did in fact transmit a very clear message. First of all they confirmed what was known all along, but has been stubbornly denied political recognition, namely that the Netherlands Antilles is not a nation but a collection of island-societies. And secondly they demonstrated that the emancipatory process which accelerated considerably during the past 13 years, has by now attained a definite level of maturity. Exactly the fact that the elections did not reveal any major shift is a most telling change from the past. The Netherlands Antilles or rather the respective islands have clearly entered a new phase of history.

Insular

Once again the process of choosing a national parliament (de Staten) never rose above the insular level. Hardly astonishing, as no nation-wide parties or alliances of parties exist. But even the only national issue at stake, Aruba's thrust for separatism, failed to arouse any strong feelings on the other islands. This in spite of the fact that Aruba's leaving the present constitutional unity will have serious consequences for the remaining five. Obviously the concept of 'one nation' does not relate to corresponding sentiments in the respective island societies. And again this should astonish no-one. After all the Netherlands Antilles were created, brought and kept together by foreign forces. The tie which presently binds the islands together is not the subconscious feeling of a common past or a deep-rooted sense of nationhood, not even the awareness of a shared cultural heritage, but the constitutional incorporation in the Kingdom of the Netherlands. All this was and is known but — and this is astonishing — has up till now not been translated into clear-cut policy making. On the contrary. In all deliberations about the future status of the islands, the concept of the Netherlands



casting ballot on Curaçao

Antilles as one nation has been the starting point. An approach which has forced Aruba to take up an increasingly extreme position.

The outcome of the recent elections seems to point in the direction of quite a different approach: first of all acceptance of the fact that the insular aspect dominates all the interactions between the islands. And secondly, if there is to be any form of co-operation between the islands in

the future, its rationale should stem from the dictates of common sense i.e. that each of the islands will have a better chance of survival when co-operating with the others than by going it alone.

Stabilization

A second conclusion which can be drawn from the election results is that the political life has entered a period of stabilization. In spite of the fact that the national government collapsed twice in two years time, the electorate voted almost entirely along the same lines as in 1979. Apart from stressing the above mentioned aspect of 'insularity', this development has laid the foundation for a period of decisive policy-making. In accordance the major political parties on the respective islands, in particular on Aruba and Curaçao, began meeting immediately after the elections to agree on a common stand with regard to the most difficult question of how to form a new cabinet and deal with Aruba's desire for status aparte at the same time. Establishing united fronts per island may well open the way to functional government at the national level and what is at least as important to a much stronger Antillean position at the conference table with the Dutch. ♦



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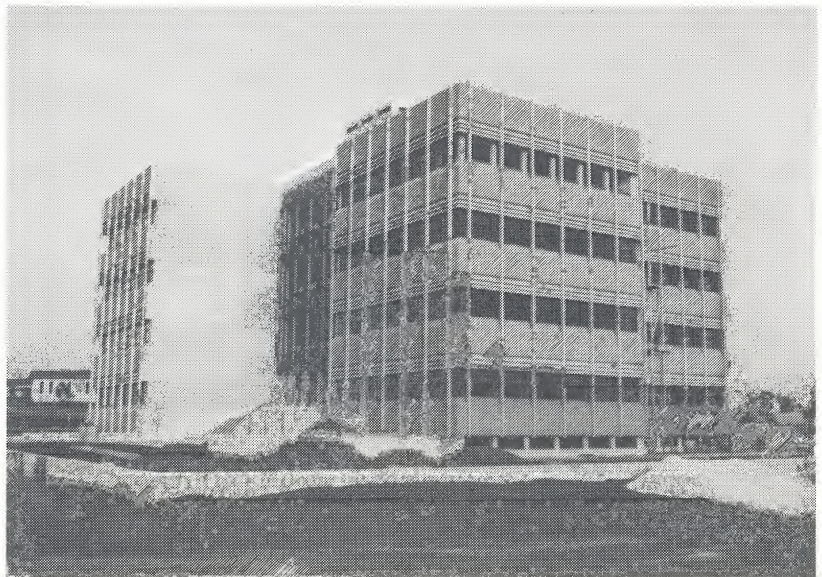
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Underlying this promising trend is the progress made in the far less tangible process usually indicated with concepts like 'emancipation' and 'search for identity'. In this respect up to now the Arubans seemed to be well ahead of Curaçao, which may partly explain their strong desire to break away from the Antillean constellation or as they might put it themselves: away from under the yoke of Curaçao's domination. But since the riots in Willemstad on the 30th of May, 1969, the emancipatory process has accelerated rapidly on Curaçao. The now solidly established position of the people's party MAN may be interpreted as a sign that the process is levelling off, having attained a certain measure of maturity. And that in turn explains the much more moderate and realistic attitude Curaçao is displaying with regard to the 'Aruban question'.

M.A.N.

There can be little doubt that the Movimento Antiyas Nobo (MAN) will play a pivotal role in the decision making with respect to the future relationship between the respective islands and with Holland. After an abortive attempt to establish themselves in the political arena in the early seventies, the group of young socialist inclined intellectuals from lower class background, which formed the hard core of MAN, waited till 1979 before trying again. In the meantime a number of them joined labour party Frente, which had arisen from the turmoil of May, '69. This move enabled them to acquire political and administrative experience. When in 1979 the Rozendal cabinet fell, the people of Curaçao were ready for a new 'clean' approach to government, tired as they were of political games, corruption and patronizing. A hastily resurrected MAN won with a landslide. The June elections of this year confirmed that victory in no uncertain terms. What it also confirms is that the common people of Curaçao know themselves to be



middle course?

represented ably in government by their own kindred. The interesting question now is in what direction the relatively young party will develop itself. Much will depend in that respect on its charismatic leader Don Martina, who is generally regarded a moderate. Having cast for himself the role of a father figure he is trusted and esteemed far beyond the confines of his party. This should enable him to keep a check on the leftist activists in his party, who got little support from the electorate and are watched with apprehension by the business community. Reassuring too is in this respect the rapidly rising star, both with-

in the party and the Curaçao community, of Mr. Jules Eisdén. Pragmatic and moderate Mr. Eisdén has in a relatively short time obtained quite a reputation as a most able negotiator. Reason why the Governor asked him to be 'informateur', sounding out the possibilities for a new coalition government.

Two more observations should be made in connection with the foregoing. First that the indicated process of emancipation has also caused a movement of renewal in the two older and well established parties DP and PNP. As a result a reasonable measure of practical co-operation between the three major parties on Curaçao is developing. Observers therefore expect for the coming years a period of political tranquility allowing for constructive government. Secondly it is interesting to note that all attempts by other groups to repeat the MAN phenomenon by promising a political alternative aborted at the last elections. The Curaçao electorate is clearly satisfied with the alternatives offered by the mentioned three parties. This too should promote stabilization.

Aparte

Whoever still harboured any doubts about the views of Aruba's man in the street with regard to the future relationship between his island and the other five, need do so no longer. The two parties most strongly in favour of separatism, MEP and AVP, won 7 of the available 8 seats in de Staten. The question now is how soon Aruba will get its desired 'status aparte' and whether this will be linked to a definite date for full independence.

A close study of the election results in Aruba seems to indicate that forerunner MEP, which for years led the battle for recognition of the island's wish to break away, is losing momentum. Rumors of corruption and



H. Eman: moderate

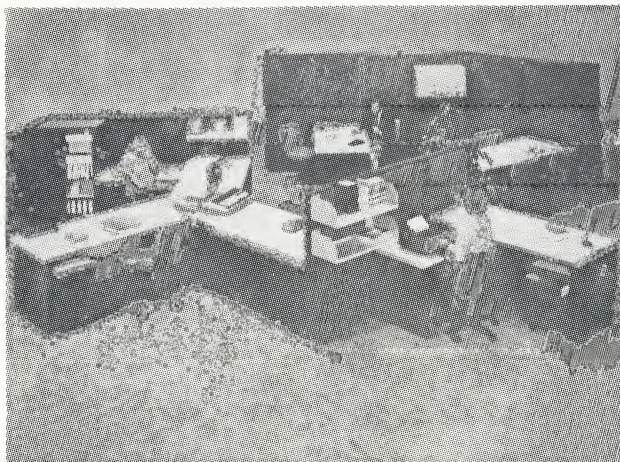
meddling with the ballots are certainly not enhancing the party's image. Now that the victory is in sight an important impetus to rally behind one party and one leader in particular is falling away. The business community in general is said to favour a strong showing of the AVP at the next elections (island council) in 1983. The slightly more moderate AVP of Mr. Henny Eman, it is felt, might be better equipped to steer Aruba through the period of transition, which administration-wise will be extremely complicated. More important such a shift in power would certainly strengthen the democratic process on Aruba.

Holland

The elections over, the time for constitutional decision making has arrived. In that process the role of Holland will be of paramount importance. In almost every aspect the islands depend heavily on Dutch assistance. Any change of a constitutional nature will require well defined guarantees in particular with regard to financial aid and territorial integrity.

The Hague's role at the confer-

ence table, however, will be strongly influenced by a number of domestic factors. First of all it should be remembered that the 'Antilles' are not a public issue in the Netherlands. Therefore none of the Dutch parties can expect any political gain from its position taking with regard to the Antilles. Coupled with the fact that the Netherlands are experiencing a recession and facing grave financial problems, it will certainly not be an easy partner to deal with. Moreover the Dutch are not exactly known for their skill in handling situations like the one on hand. One of the most serious mistakes they could make is to keep insisting on the linkage between status aparte for Aruba and a fixed date for full independence. The argument in the past has been that such a condition would shock the Arubans to their senses. Far more probable is that it will jeopardize the future of all six islands. It is still very much the question whether Aruba will indeed opt for full independence after it has obtained status aparte. At least history should be allowed to run its course without too much pressure from the former colonial overlord. ♦



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Integrity

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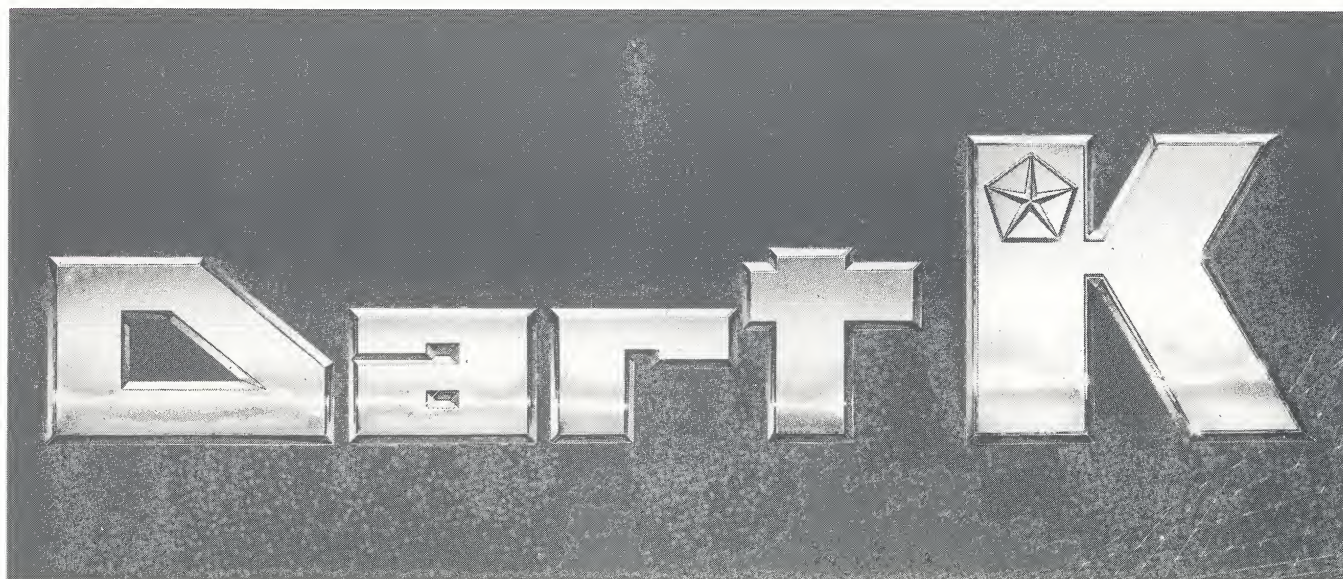
Venezuela's all out support for Argentina in the recent Falkland crisis has made many aware of the vulnerability of small island states just off the coast of a regional super power. The rapid military build up of Venezuela, which is no doubt prompted by its increasingly belligerent oratory with regard to its claims to a large part of Guyana, is not going unnoticed. Realization is dawning that a disintegration of the Antilles will heighten the chance of a Venezuelan take-over or at least heavy domination of the three leeward islands by Caracas. The dictates of political realism are clear. The geographi-



Pres. Herera Campins: all out support for Argentina

cal position of the islands and their size force the Antilles to accept that their future depends very much on decisions taken in foreign capitals. The only, but in itself very significant difference with the past is, that they themselves are now in a position to prevent possible unwanted developments by making the right decisions. The underlying question is whether the process of emancipation has developed far enough to allow for a proper balance between feelings of pride and common sense.

The attitude of determination displayed by the Antillean electorate during the last elections does seem to warrant a positive answer. ■



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The Fourth Estate

Esteemed journalist reflects on role of the press

Recently celebrating thirty-five years of journalistic activity in the Netherlands Antilles — most of which time was spent on Aruba — Jos van der Schoot (57) has become one of 'the powers that be' on the island. In charge of daily paper AMIGOE's Aruba operation since 1962, his fearless adherence to the most lofty principles of journalism has given his voice a distinct ring of authority. His growing concern about attempts to intimidate the press and his fear for an imminent loss of journalistic quality are certainly not to be taken lightly.

Bullying

Asked for his opinion about the function of the press in politically volatile Aruba, the usually good natured van der Schoot replies in a both forceful and worried manner: to do a proper job is becoming increasingly difficult. Attempts to intimidate the press are taking a threatening character, according to the hard driving editor. Known for his objective reporting, van der Schoot realizes that his writings will not always please everybody. But that is a far cry from the threats he has recently been receiving from several political leaders. He has been told that 'if you continue like this we can become very nasty'. Comments van der Schoot 'I try to report as truthfully as possible and I will certainly not be bullied. After all we (at the AMIGOE) receive a lot of positive and encouraging reactions from our readers. They outnumber these low level and undemocratic threats by far'. Still his worry seems justified as these tendencies to curb the freedom of the press indicate an erosion of democracy, in particular as they originate from Aruba's leaders. Mr. Betico Croes upon returning from Holland late July clearly intended in a subtle manner to undermine Mr. van der

Schoot's professional integrity, when he declared that Mr. van der Schoot's credibility is declining in the Netherlands. The truth is that the AMIGOE's reporting on Antillean developments is regarded in The Hague as the most reliable!

Quality

From a journalism perspective the above can of course also be interpreted positively as it proves that the press has become a recognized power in the Aruban society. Mr. van Schoot agrees. 'Our comments have more than once influenced political decision making and even brought about a change of action on several occasions. Reason why he is most anxious that the Aruban press corps will not only maintain a certain level of quality but continue to strive for improvement. Two matters that give cause for concern.

First of all van der Schoot expresses disappointment with the fact that apparently no national press conference will be held this year. With a view to the absence of training possibilities such occasions offer a rare chance to meet and work at upgrading journalism. 'From editor in chief to photographer', he states, 'we can use every opportunity to



learn and improve our skills'. The birth early August of the seventh daily on the ABC-islands constitutes his other concern. Although he favours a fair diversification in the media world, van der Schoot rightly fears a possible loss of quality. 'and after all quality is what really matters! In his opinion the tendency to write in a sensationalistic manner is already much too great. Too often journalists in our society have to admit afterwards that they should have thought twice before committing half-truths to paper.

future

These critical reflections are counterbalanced by his satisfaction with the professional enthusiasm of the Aruban press corps.

Van der Schoot, whose contribution to the island's social life has been of an astonishing variety, for many years was president of the Aruban Press Club. He recently stepped down to make room for the younger generation. He is most willing, however, to continue sharing his knowledge and experience.

With a view to the island's future, Aruba should pride itself on having such an outstanding newsman in its midst. ■



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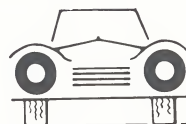


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The story of Mazarello

Child care centre promotes self-help

When in a couple of weeks the representative of the Netherlands and the Foundation Bon Kwido sign a financial agreement making the acquisition of 'Mazarello' by the latter possible, a genuine case of development work will have been ensured a future. Or more precisely: an increasing number of women from the lowest income group will be enabled to continue helping themselves.

In theory it looked good. The slowly but steadily increasing tourist industry on the island should provide employment for a likewise increasing number of women from the lower income brackets. But when the women organization Orfebo, on request of the Island Government, undertook a research into the needs for daily child care, they found a different story. In fact very few women from those groups were benefitting from the improving employment situation. The reason being that many of them, often not married, had no-one to take care of their children while at work.

Dependence

In March 1979 the findings of Orfebo were officially presented to the Island Government. Six months later Catholic Sister Virginia started a child care centre with the express purpose of creating a possibility for young women to take up work and thereby improve their economic situation. Such an improvement would be of great importance, it was felt, in particular to unmarried mothers. This way they might become more independent or rather less dependent on the 'next' boyfriend who might come along.

In order to run the centre as profes-

sionally as possible special courses to train girls in child care were first organized.

The Government agreed to subsidize the project by taking charge of salaries. When Sister Virginia opened the door of her centre in September 1979 applications for the admittance of twice as many children as she could possibly take in were received.

Quarters

The earlier mentioned organization of women 'Orfebo' soon realized that the now proven need demanded a broader organizational set-up. Before the end of '79 a foundation for this purpose was established. 'Bon Kwido's' board immediately set out to search for larger and more adequate quarters. In June 1980 the congregation of Franciscan Sisters of Mariadal, Roosendaal, Holland, were found willing to let the foundation Bon Kwido use Mazarello, a centre once built by the congregation for the care of juvenile boys.

Room was created for the different age-groups and several organizations helped to furnish the building.

Impact

Between 1980 and 1982 the number of children visiting the centre daily, rose from 90 to 134. Although no exact figures could be provided insiders estimate that at least 20 to 30 women from the afore mentioned social background were thus enabled to go out and work in the hotels, shops and tourist related industries. To facilitate the working mothers the centre opens daily at 6.30 a.m. and does not

close before 7.30 p.m.

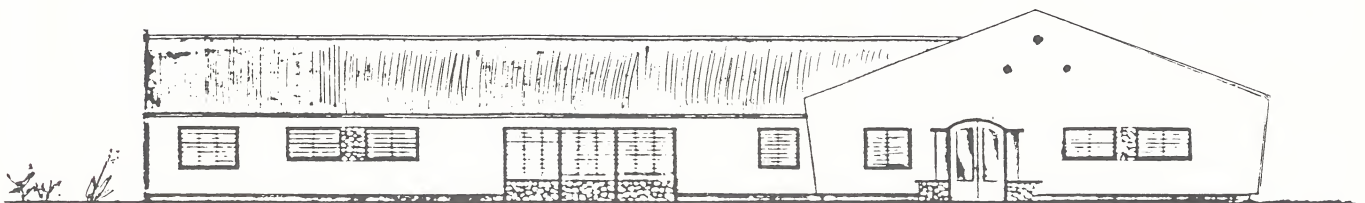
Children from 6 months old up to 6 years (primary school) are daily entrusted to the care of ten trained ladies, who run the centre. The mothers are charged for the services rendered, but fees are related to the parents' income.

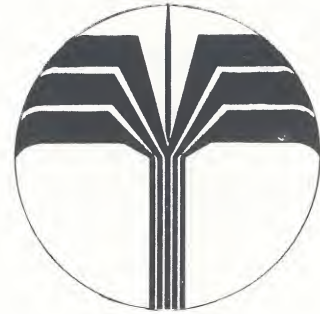
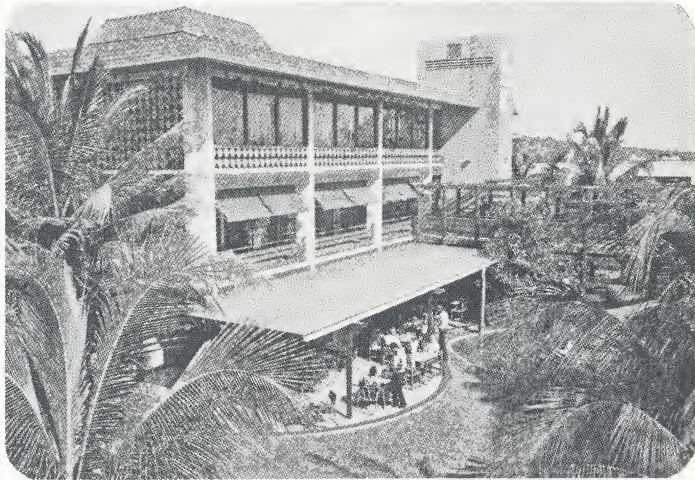
Finance

When the sisters van Roosendaal made their premises available (free of charge) they laid down one condition being that the Foundation Bon Kwido should within a reasonable time-limit buy the building. With the assistance of Cede-Antiyas, an organization aimed at helping private initiative acquire the necessary funds for development projects, a project-description was drawn up and submitted to the Dutch Representative for Development-work in Curaçao. The total costs of the project are NAf 360,000.—, 25% of which has already been guaranteed by the sisters van Roosendaal! Expectations are that Holland will approve the request and take care of the remaining 75%.

The Foundation has been running its financial matters in an admirable way and there is no doubt whatsoever about the necessity of the work.

If Holland agrees the Foundation Kwibo will be able to continue a most valuable service to the Bonairean society. A service it should be noted which does not create a new dependency but rather a means for women to help themselves. ■





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Tourism:

Now or never

Interview



Turning the first page of a recently published report on tourism in Curaçao the readers' attention is caught by a quotation from the French nihilistic writer André Gide: "Everything has been said before, but because nobody listens one has continuously to start all over again". The citation is aptly chosen, for reporting on the island's tourism consists inevitably of telling a sorry tale, mostly because a host of advisory studies have never been given due attention. There is, however, one marked difference between the mood of Gidé's words and the content of this latest study. The authors, though highly critical, write from a constructive perspective. AR talked with one the authors, hotel manager Frank Maynard, about some of the issues raised by the report.

AR: *after reading the report one is left with the impression that one of the main reasons for the serious decline of tourism on the island is a matter of mentality.*

Maynard: This is indeed one of our greatest problems. As the report points out the manner in which tourists are approached is far from what it should be. People simply have not been made aware of the vital impor-

tance of the industry for the island's economy. What is urgently needed is a comprehensive programme of re-motivation. By comprehensive we mean that the problem should be tackled over television, in the schools, shops, community centres, hotels etc. But — and this I like to stress — something should be done at the same time about the living conditions of the poorer part of our population. We have to create a fa-

vourable climate for the promotion of tourism and that implies solving the problems of unemployment, inadequate housing and insufficient social security.

Then there is the matter of discipline, which has slackened to an inadmissible level. The government itself fails disastrously in this respect. But it should also be said that the business community has taken too little initiative in criticizing and pressuring the government. As a result we are left with a sick situation. To give you one example: presently we have no legislation regulating the industry. And therefore no sanctions can be applied, for example when a cab driver overcharges a tourist. Presently such legislation is being prepared and there are indications that our local politicians are willing to cooperate.

AR: *your report is highly critical of the performance of government with regard to tourism and suggests that private enterprise should be put in charge.*

Maynard: Correct. Tourism is business and only a business-like approach can save the situation. That is why the report proposes to replace the government's tourist office with a foundation for the promotion of tourism manned with professionals. All the different aspect from improving the product to marketing should be dealt with comprehensively. The problem in the past was that civil servants with no business experience were in charge. I applaud the decision to appoint businessmen in the board of directors of our much criticized national carrier ALM. A reason why I think we should give it the benefit of the doubt for the time being.

AR: *Your stressing the role of private enterprise seems to run counter to opinions voiced by the increasingly active progressive groups in our society.* ♦

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Maynard: denouncing capitalism is nothing new, nor typical of our society. The fact that anti-capitalistic ideas have spread all over the world and also reached us, does not mean they are right. As I have said before we will have to improve the social conditions on the island but we will only save the situation if private enterprise takes the lead.

With regard to the progressive groups, you mentioned, also this: we will have to overcome the present mood of exaggerated nationalism. I'm all for Antilleanization but the price should never be a loss of quality. The present prohibitive attitude toward immigration is killing all progress. A society becomes stale if the influx of new talent and ideas is arrested. Take a simple example. Ten years ago all the major hotels had an excellent cuisine. Rigorous Antilleanization has led to a deterioration of know-how and service. And I should mention also that at the same time our educational system has gone

backwards considerably. Twenty years ago one could employ youngsters leaving school usefully. Today that is out of the question. They lack the most basic knowledge. To my mind this constitutes one the greatest problems our society is facing.

AR: *Critical as you and your colleagues may be, your report does forward some very positive and constructive proposals.*

Maynard: Yes, it is now or never! We strongly believe in the touristic possibilities of the island. That is why we have drawn up both an emergency plan and a longterm policy. Though the amounts needed to upgrade the product may look staggering, we are convinced that a sound plan will never lack funds. In order to bring the hotel accomodation up to par we should go all out. Take the Plaza hotel. To restore it to a first class level NAf 7 million will have to be

spent. Attempts to fix things up as has been done in the past, spending a mere one million, means throwing your money away. The same applies to the other proposals of the emergency plan like beautifying our city, cleaning the beaches, upgrading services etc. If we want to put our island back on the map as an attractive tourist resort we will have to be willing both to invest and let professionals do the work. You will have noticed from the report that the industry is still quite important with regard to employment, foreign exchange and the economy in general. We are convinced that its contribution can be improved considerably. ■

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St. Maarten:

Bearing the burden of a Free Press

by Frank Yacenda

When the evening ALM flight left Miami bound for St. Maarten on June 25, on board were four graduate-level communication students from the University of Florida. The group, sponsored by the Curaçao-based Stichting Grafische Communicatie (Foundation Graphic Media), was to be the second such contingent of Florida students brought to St. Maarten in as many summers to lend technical assistance to the newspapers and radio of the island.

No one expects the students, who form the leading edge of the Stichting's St. Maarten Media Project, to dissolve any of the myriad obstacles facing the island's news media. Yet, their work could be an important step in helping Philipsburg's publishers and broadcasters resolve their own difficulties and achieve their greatest potentials. If the project succeeds in its goals, the ramifications may be felt far beyond St. Maarten, the Netherlands Antilles, and even the Caribbean Basin.

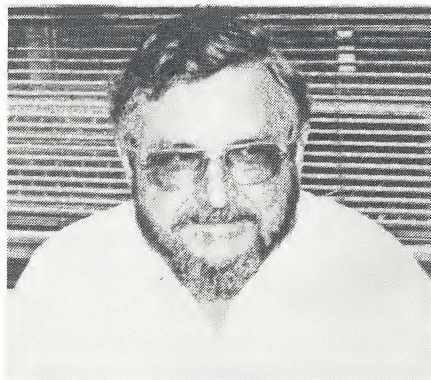
Assistance

The problems encountered by the American media specialists in St. Maarten are very different from those they must address when working in the United States. They are the problems that their Antillean counterparts deal with every week of the year, and they resemble the difficulties confronted by media professionals throughout the less developed world.

Problems of understaffing, inadequate and outmoded production equipment, and poor financial rewards — all arising from the more basic dilemmas of undercapitalization, small audiences, low revenues, inefficient methods, and a lack of professional training and standards — are some of the "givens" faced by St. Maarten's publishers and

broadcasters. The Stichting's project is geared toward helping resolve these and related problems that are retarding media development on the island.

Funded by both private and public sources largely in The Netherlands, the effort is considered by its sponsors to be an important first step in assisting the St. Maarten media stabilize and strengthen themselves. And judging by the response in



Teamleader Buddy Davis Jr.

Philipsburg, the four small newspapers, one radio station, and one newsletter that are at the receiving end of the project value that assistance.

Implications

At issue, of course, is more than simply the journalistic and financial well-being of a few tiny and struggling enterprises on one smallish island. The grander implications include the role played

by a free and independent news voice in a democratic — and also independent — nation, and the three-way relationship between media, government, and society. With apparently inevitable independence from The Hague looming ever larger on the horizon — the current discussions over the status of Aruba underscore the urgency of the situation — the viability of communication media in St. Maarten and throughout the Dutch West Indies takes on crucial importance.

Alternative

The Stichting's St. Maarten project assumes still greater interest when it is compared with other media development projects being carried on throughout the Third World. Commonly backed by such international organizations as the United Nations' UNESCO agency, these comparatively well-funded programs frequently employ highly-paid communication "experts" in elaborate training schemes involving media personnel. The trend of these schemes, which all too closely reflect UNESCO's rapidly evolving philosophy of "developmental journalism," is to involve national governments in media matters. True as well in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, this has certainly been the case elsewhere in the Caribbean where communication researchers have noted a steady erosion of press freedom in recent years attributable in large measure to UNESCO's influence. The St. Maarten Media Project, on the other hand, springs from the Western tradition which holds that politicians and journalists ought to sleep in separate beds if journalism is to retain its

“watchdog” role over government. In that critical aspect the Stichting’s approach provides a welcome alternative to UNESCO’s politically inspired “developmental journalism” theory. As an added bonus, the cost benefits achieved by making intensive use of professionally skilled graduate-level students in on-the-job training of St. Maarten media personnel can be matched by few other programs. If the St. Maarten project succeeds, it could have positive repercussions for media development efforts world-wide.

Press Freedom

In several respects, the St. Maarten media are themselves already ahead of the game. While undeniable tensions persist between governmental leaders and the island’s media — some of which remain blatantly partisan in their orientation — freedom of expression is not seriously challenged and the line between public controversy and governmental control of the media is essentially unbreached. More the exception than the rule in the developing world today, this state of affairs provides grounds to hope for the future and is perhaps the biggest “plus” enjoyed by St. Maarten’s news organizations.

In terms of such standard indicators as educational attainment, literacy, commerce, and per capita income — all of which exercise an influence on the media’s po-

tential market — the Netherlands Antilles also fare well in relation to much of the Caribbean region, and are light-years ahead of vast areas of the Third World. St. Maarten and its media of course share in these positive conditions too.

Dissatisfaction

Still, serious challenges remain for Philipsburg’s fourth estate. The success with which these challenges are met will likely determine the future health and potency of St. Maarten’s present media as effective vehicles for information and opinion. Particularly in regard to the island’s four newspapers which elbow each other for depressingly puny cuts of an already small pie, the future is uncertain.

An informal survey conducted last summer several of St. Maarten’s leading business, political, public service, and media figures reveals some of the gut causes underlying many of the St. Maarten media’s shortcomings. The study shows that while almost all of those polled rank local news at least equally to national and international news in importance, dissatisfaction with the quality and quantity of island media coverage of local events perceived as being particularly newsworthy also runs high. Local radio news coverage ranks slightly higher than local press news coverage among the respondents, but the overwhelming feeling re-

garding both types of media is that “improvements are essential.”

Almost universally, those questioned believe that local newspapers and radio have trouble separating fact from opinion in reporting the news. Along with this blurring of news and views, the study respondents cite media deficiencies in such areas as financial resources, personnel, comprehension of community problems, and feedback from readers and listeners. Disconcertingly, among the media people polled, “lack of access to public records and information” and “lack of cooperation by news makers and sources” both receive high response rates.

Criticism

Among the group as a whole, however, the level of professionalism exhibited by St. Maarten’s news media comes in for strong criticism. Every response received rates the island’s press and radio as either “not very professional” or, worse, “very unprofessional,” thus reinforcing the importance of the work being carried out by the Stichting.

The survey is especially instructive in one other respect: clearly, much of the local media’s steam is being bled away by off-island media that are better able to meet the demand for news that undeniably exists on St. Maarten. But it is an extremely hopeful sign — and one that should prove encouraging to both the Stichting and the island’s media alike — that the survey’s pacemakers achieve near-unanimity in agreeing that local news media are “very important” to the development of the St. Maarten community.

Competition


The question that remains is whether the press and radio of St. Maarten, even with the media project’s assistance, will be able to overcome the hurdles facing them or whether they will succumb to the rigors of a ten-

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uous existence. Some observers argue that, especially among the island's newspapers, there are simply too many competitors in the ring. They cite low circulation figures — five- to seven-hundred copies weekly is the best that any of the papers can muster — to support their belief. Still, as long as the thirst for news goes unslaked on the island, and as long as more can be done to improve both the operational efficiency and product quality of the media, it would be premature to write off any of St. Maarten's news organizations. And the eagerness with which most of the island's media have embraced the assistance offered by the St. Maarten Media Project is an indication of their commitment to go the distance.

Challenge

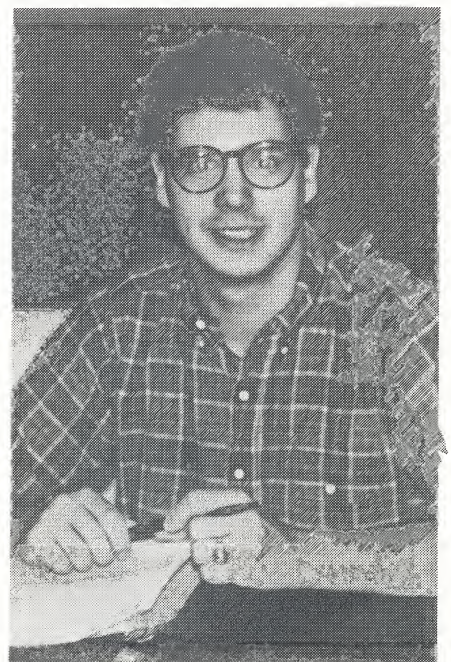
One avenue that can stand further exploration is that of greater cooperation between individual news firms. If not news ga-

thering itself, such non-editorial functions as production, advertising and distribution could be handled on a cooperative basis as they are already in many other places. But there does appear to be a growing awareness of the value of cooperation. As one St. Maarten newsperson put it last summer, "If we don't start working together, someone else is going to come along and do it right, and we won't even get the crumbs. We'll be out."

And who might that "someone else" be? Perhaps an operation from off the island that cares less about St. Maarten as a unique community than does the present home-grown crop of media. Or perhaps government, which seldom monitors itself particularly well. Neither alternative is desirable.

As the Stichting Grafische Communicatie recognizes with its media project, and as the dedicated newspeople of St. Maarten acknowledge with their work, a free and vital news voice is essen-

tial to a free and vital society. It is a little bit of this burden that the Florida students carried with them to St. Maarten this summer. ■



student Andy Morgan



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Economic survey

by H. C. Beers

Shell has to pay f 28 million and Lago about f 156 million after compensation.

Monetary developments

The deposits held by the Island Governments with the Central Bank fell sharply during the second quarter. At the end of June an amount of only f 1.3 million was stated on the Central Bank's balance sheet compared to f 27.6 million at the end of March. However, the Island Governments also maintain balances with the private banking institutions. At the end of March these balances amounted to f 53.5 million, making a total of f 81.1 million in favour of the Island Governments.

By far the largest part of this amount is held by Aruba, which received f 110 million profit taxes from Lago last year. As per the end of June an amount of about f 5.5 million will be left. In July, as already mentioned, Aruba will receive about f 156 million, but according to the existing revenue-sharing agreement has yet to pay 25% of last year's amount to the Central Government. On a balance the money supply can be expected to grow drastically in the month of July.

The local banking system will certainly welcome the inflow of the new money. During May and June some of the banks had to borrow from the Central Bank at the official lending rate of 10%. In June the banks' balances with the Central Bank fell to a low level of f 25 million meaning that at least their domestic liquid funds were tight. This was caused by the high increase of banknotes in circulation resulting from the payments of holiday bonuses and the deficit in foreign payments, which is partly related to the loans and investments made by ALM and KAE. ♦

The official foreign reserves with the Central Bank declined rapidly to a level of f 189.2 million resulting in a loss of f 25.7 million during the second quarter of 1982. Besides the seasonal pattern some very large payments were made in connection with the KAE investments and down payments on the purchase of aircraft by the ALM. The Island Governments in particular Aruba reduced their deposits, which were initially about f 100 million, to a level of f 25 million. This amount is roughly enough for Aruba to pay the Central Government starting August 1982 according to the existing tax sharing agreement. In July Lago paid to the Island Government of Aruba the amount of f 156 million profit tax after deduction of f 12 million, since Aruba did not deliver the quantity of water to the oil refinery as agreed in the past. The outlook for the employment situation did not improve by the announcements of the two oil refineries Lago Aruba and Shell Curaçao that activities had been reduced. Besides the Curaçao Drydock Company stated that the seasonal reduction in ship repairing was worse than expected.

Foreign reserves

The official reserves with the Central Bank dropped f 23.8 million to a level of f 189.2 million in the second week of June. For almost a year the reserves stayed well above f 200 million, but the seasonal outflow of foreign exchange during the second quarter together with some payments to abroad accounted for this substantial decline. At the end of June the official reserves amounted to f 194.1 million. During that month a drain of f 25.5 million was recorded, compared to f 9.1 million in May.

April closed with an increase of f 8.9 million. The combined deficit for the second quarter amounted to f 25.7 million. However, on an annual basis the outcome resulted in a surplus of f 32.2 million.

These amounts do not include the foreign reserves of the private banking system. These banks held net claims on abroad of f 76 million at the end of May and f 85 million at the end of April 1982.

The large payments to abroad concerned a down payment of about f 8 million on behalf of the national airline ALM for the purchase of new aircraft. The airplanes have a total value of about f 90 million.

Besides the KAE of Curaçao, a water and electricity producing utility, transferred f 27 million in connection with new investments. This amount was lent by domestic institutional investors such as pension funds and insurance companies. The transfer was made in May out of foreign funds, but resulted in a decline of reserves a month later. The Central Bank had temporarily pledged some of its deposits with foreign banks until the financing and payments were completed. Because of the seasonal pattern foreign reserves are at their lowest level at the end of June. In the beginning of July the oil refineries of Shell and Lago have to pay profit taxes. For that purpose they will remit from their foreign banking accounts the counter value of the amounts payable.

Capital market

The Central Government announced a bond issue to be purchased as from the end of May at the Department of Finance or the private banks. The bonds are yielding an interest of 12% and will be redeemed in 5 equal payments during 1988/1992 resulting in an average term of 7,5 years. The amount borrowed is meant for the financial restructuring of the national airline ALM. In the announcement the restructuring is defined as the improvement of the balance sheet ratio's and the enlargement of the working capital as well as to invest in the ground facilities and to provide the down payments for the purchase of two DC-9-80 aircraft.

A maximum amount to be borrowed was not mentioned nor the period during which the bonds will be for sale. After well over a month the total amount sold to the public was not yet announced. Probably this amount will be less than f 10 million.


This information, however, is im-

portant to form an opinion on the capital market. Another factor is the absence of any figures of the ALM; no annual reports were published and no forecasts were given to judge the necessity of the bond issue. One cannot expect an investor to buy bonds without sufficient information. In respect to the KAE financing these details were not published either. Maybe, the institutional investors received some, but to stimulate the development of a local capital market a policy of making all relevant information available to the public would be better.

Lago Aruba

Although the oil refinery had to pay in July after compensation for water claims a record of f 156 million for profit tax the performance this year is anything but good.

Traditionally the company does not publish any information, but in the first new announcement to its personnel since years it was clear that the prosperous deve-



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lopment of the previous years was over.

In 1981 Lago paid f 110 million profit tax related to the financial year 1980. This year an amount of f 168 million is due in connection with 1981. Lago will pay this amount after a deduction for water not delivered by the Island Government of Aruba. The amount concerned is estimated at about f 12 million. Consequently the Island Government received about f 156 million in cash.

The Lago refinery has a capacity of 450,000 barrels per day, but nowadays it is processing only 180,000 barrels. Lago cannot increase this volume because of its delivery contract with Venezuela, stipulating that Lago may only purchase crude oil from third parties related to the volume received from Venezuela. At present Venezuela delivers only 150,000 barrels a day and Lago is able to purchase an additional 30,000 barrels from third parties, which cannot be increased. The contract is in force until the end of this year.

Because of these circumstances profits, if any, will not be high this year and are favourably influenced by the fact that the fixed charges are relatively low, as the refinery is already completely written off. Besides the volume will probably increase after September when demand for oil will grow because of the coming winter season.

Prospects are not entirely unfavourable. Lago is one of

CENTRAL BANK CONDENSED BALANCE SHEET; f MILLION

	30-6-82	31-5-82	30-4-82	31-3-82
Gold stock	41.4	41.4	41.4	41.4
Foreign reserves	194.1	219.6	228.7	219.8
Loans to:				
- fed. government	89.8	90.0	89.8	87.2
- local banks	1.2	2.4	—	—
- other	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1
Sundry assets	7.9	7.6	6.7	6.5
TOTAL	335.5	361.1	367.7	356.0
Bank notes	186.1	175.3	175.6	171.4
Deposits held by:				
- fed. tax collectors	4.5	2.1	5.6	3.6
- Island governments	1.3	12.9	36.9	27.6
- local banks	25.4	46.0	28.4	37.2
- development projects	19.8	28.1	30.2	27.0
- non residents	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1
Money in custody	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1
Sundry liabilities	22.8	21.5	19.6	17.3
Capital and reserves	51.1	52.1	52.1	52.1

the very few refineries which are able to process the heavy oil of the Orinoco basin. The sale of the oil products is not the main problem as Lago has long term contracts.

Shell Curaçao

The oil refinery of Shell Curaçao is not performing very well either. The management announced plans to lay off 200-250 workers through early retirement. At present Shell and its affiliated companies employ 2747 persons. The management stated the worsening of the financial position resulting from the less favourable developments on the international oil markets as the cause for the drastic measures. Although no figures were given, it was mentioned that the losses during the first months of 1982 had already reached such an amount that compensation through an upsurge of demand is almost impossible.

These negative developments

have led to measures to cut down expenses.

Shell Curaçao has tried several times to spare the employees, but apparently the financial problems are now such that a part of its personnel has to be laid off. These measures will have a tremendous negative influence on the current and future employment situation of Curaçao. The impression exists that these influences are hardly recognized by the politicians, the local press and the trade unions. At the time of the announcement, shortly before the elections, no comments were heard. It almost seemed nobody worried that employment had reduced again.

Curaçao Drydock Company

To make employment matters even worse the management of the Curaçao Drydock Company of Curaçao announced that the demand for its services had been reduced. Especially ship owners from Latin-America seemed to

be staying away. As a possible cause for this change in attitude reference was made to the Falkland war.

The foreign press had erroneously mentioned that the Curaçao Drydock had been used to repair British war ships. As a result of these circumstances, the management proposed to the trade unions to freeze the current salaries and to forget the compensations for inflation as stipulated in the existing labour agreement.

The management did not give any figures. The company has never published its annual reports, although the government is a shareholder. It is very hard to evaluate the measures proposed by the management without such relevant figures. ■

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Thoughts On A Dem

The World Is

by Gregory B.

Latin American affairs have historically been assigned low priority by the United States. In general, US attention focuses on Europe, the Middle East, and on those countries that border the Soviet Union. It is only when there is a crisis or a natural disaster that Latin American issues do receive a high priority from Washington. While there have been no earthquakes or floods since the Reagan administration has come to office, there has been a tidal wave of Latin American and Caribbean crises which have occasioned an unusual amount of policy work in the State Department and the White House.

For the most part, US response to Latin American events is reactive rather than proactive. High level North American efforts to find solutions to the problems of the hemisphere, even to long-standing problems like poverty and development, are customarily the result of improvisation, often hastily organized, rather than of deliberate study and preparation. Large policies that encompass long-term commitments to strategies and programs have been rare. In the last 50 years, only the Alliance for Progress and the Good Neighbor Policy have been such examples.

Latin American governments, generally, have acquiesced in the low priority status assigned them in Washington. While some have done so without much complaint, some even with relief, others worry that US policy bureaus have not adequately understood the changes that are occurring in their republics. Washington persists in asking old questions, traditional and unrelated to new realities: How safe are the investment and political climates of Latin American countries for North Americans? How restrictive are the policies respecting raw materials access and export? What are the market conditions for US exports? Are

tariffs too high? What is the situation regarding local manufacture and assembly operations?

To Latin Americans these North American queries appear to ignore or obscure the political and social changes that have been developing over the past 25 years in Latin America and the Caribbean. To take just one political matter, it is not clear that US policy makers are adequately aware of the new relations that have developed between Latin America and France, West Germany, and Japan. Or to take a social matter, it is not clear that US policy makers have come to terms with the fact that Latin America has a larger and denser urban coastal frontier than does the United States. (Between now and the year 2000, the population of Latin America will increase from over 350 million to over 600 million persons!)

Paying the Bills

The overriding preoccupation of Latin American leaders today, whether eating, sleeping or working, has to be with how to pay the bills. A companion to that preoccupation is, of course, how to find the money necessary to run urban economies and render those services necessary to keep the lid on a boiling social pot. Internally, the supply side shows no likelihood whatsoever of being able to equal the demand side. And if the demand side is not supported, demand will erupt into an unconditional demand that could destroy what fragile social fabric still exists. World prices for needed import goods are at all-time highs. Energy costs alone have decimated currency reserves. Inflation has blunted efforts to plan, much less carry out, major expenditures. US Agency for International Development grants necessarily

have been modified to accommodate new US domestic priorities. The US explains these cut-backs as necessary to reduce the excess of former US administrations.

Blanketing the whole economic and political landscape is the rising level of Latin America's external debt. Overall, it is estimated to be \$ 230 billion. A large part of any working day for government leaders in Latin America has to be spent considering how to re-schedule debts that cannot be paid and how to negotiate yet additional loans for current needs. The pressures of over-extension that result from over-borrowing are staggering the capacities of most of the public managers. Increasingly, these pressures also test the patience and forbearance of the leaders. Meanwhile, the game goes on, modified in pace by the efforts of the International Monetary Fund to impose rigid economic regimens intended to reduce spending and tighten credit. Attempts to conform to the terms only tighten the economic Catch-22.

All this is hard on the psyches of the developing world. And yet, the whole economic climate of the world seems to be driving the developing countries, the smaller ones especially, into the old mold of having to rely on selling raw materials and agriproducts at low market prices while trying to get hold of traditional necessities, as well as of newly-perceived ones, on terms that are more burdensome than ever.

Against this background, some US policy makers have been attempting to develop responses to calls for help, particularly in the Caribbean and

Gregory B. Wolfe, president of Florida International University, has occupied US government posts in the White House and the Department of State. This article was first published in Caribbean Review vol. XI no. 2.

The New

Democratic Consortium

Small to stay

Wolfe

Central American region. To date, the principal experiment, yet to be tested in action, is President Ronald Reagan's Caribbean Basin Initiative. Its author hails the Initiative as a free enterprise panacea for dealing with underdevelopment. It stresses a heightened role for private investment as the spur to restore confidence in flattened, flagging economic systems, and to create jobs in places that are radically overpopulated and critically underemployed. The Initiative calls for the establishment of a common market between the United States and participating countries, for one-way free trade and an array of tax breaks for investors willing to join the crusade to make capitalism work in the troubled region.

Some critical questions must be answered before we can know whether or not, and if so, how, this new Initiative will work. Will the US Congress buy it? The answer to this question will be determined largely on domestic rather than on foreign policy considerations. Will the private investment community rise to the incentive claimed for the Initiative? Or will it react to the oft-repeated position of the White House and the State Department that communism is behind most, if not all, of the insurgent movements in the area and therefore withhold its participation? As long as the instability indices require costly gifts of hardware and resident US military advisors to keep the peace of the area, why should US business not act on clear competitive advantage and go elsewhere? For many investors and investing corporations, that would seem still to mean Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore, Sri Lanka, and even the People's Republic of China.

Washington sources say that the plan-

ners of the Caribbean Basin Initiative held discussions with representatives of Mexico and Venezuela. However, there is no clear indication that the program will have a multilateral and multinational character. If the experience of international business and international organization of the past 30 years has had any instructive product, it is that we now know that development speeds up and profits rise significantly when capital and knowhow are combined in ways that cross frontiers and narrowly-conceived old-fashioned corporate structures. If then the realities of international interdependence are genuine, and if the monetary crisis is truly global, and the future of the democratic world is somehow linked to economic and political pluralism, the time may be upon us to recognize that the world is small to stay. This would allow us to make bold with the Caribbean Initiative. It might become the key to that New International Economic Order which has been eluding its advocates and confounding its critics.

A Democratic Consortium

With Germany, Japan, France, and Great Britain included, the Initiative could pool resources of nations in which economic systems which are mixed but free are combined with political systems essentially committed to democratic forms. The first basic commitment of such a consortium would be to solving the problems of underdevelopment: pitifully inadequate health care, inadequate clean water supplies, the need to develop transportation and energy sources, etc. But in such a team effort, consideration could now be given to demilitarizing the whole Caribbean and Central American region. Pledges

of investment by the richer nations could be exchanged for pledges of gradual elimination of costly military establishments from the poorer ones. Such an exchange would be based in developing a continuing commitment to civilian control from the concerned democratic governments. The alternative to such a consortium is merely to accept the ineffective process of country by country "coup-crisis" management efforts by the United States. Such efforts are by their very nature self-limited by the domestic economic policies now advocated by the Reagan administration, as well as by the clear rejection of unilateral US influence by many Latin American political leaders on the right and left.

Thus the first step toward a new policy for US-Latin American relations may be to transcend them by establishing a consortium of democratic powers. The purpose of the consortium would be to internationalize the process of effecting political change and economic development simultaneously. It would thereby become the means to avoid the costly repetition of beginnings that are made and then lost among givers and receivers of political advice and material goods. Countries which claim a democratic tradition and pledge its progressive refinement should welcome an opportunity to accelerate the rate of their development on all fronts. The consortium could lay down conditions for substantial aid availability to recipient Latin American countries: among them a commitment to observe elections, to respect human rights, to limit or eliminate military expenditures to practice parliamentary politics.

Only a broadly-based multinationally-organized set of political and economic resources will help us deliver a more secure future for the peoples of Latin America as well as meet the priorities of the United States. This then would make any initiative not only a series of bilateral economic relationships but multinational political ones as well. ■

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The Offshore Business

Progress Report

The importance of the off-shore business for the economy of the Netherlands Antilles in general and Curaçao in particular is indisputable. So is the excellence of its reputation with regard to banking standards. Moreover, in an indirect way the industry has become essential to the effort of maintaining and strengthening the democratic process, both in the Antilles and the region beyond. Questionable, to put it mildly, is therefore the declared intention of USA's Treasury to modify (unilaterally) the income tax protocol with the Netherlands Antilles. A measure which would deal a staggering blow to the archipelago's economy, causing great social unrest and a destabilisation of its political life. The implications from a regional perspective would be very serious indeed. Presenting these arguments in Washington has up till now yielded little result. All that has been achieved is a prolongation of the ongoing consultations between the two countries, which in turn has gained the industry breathing space till 1984.

History

Treasury's recent attempt to amend the tax protocol contrasts sharply with US policies in the past. As early as 1948 an Income Tax Convention was signed between The Netherlands and the USA. On June 15, 1955 this convention was extended to the Antilles. With a view to the different tax regulations in the Antilles the protocol was amended in 1963, the modification being only applicable to the latter mentioned member of the Kingdom. What was drawn up amounted in fact to a second protocol, this time between the Antilles and the USA.

It should be remembered that the purpose of such treaties is to eliminate or at least mitigate the impact of impediments to trade caused by double taxation between competing tax systems. As late as 1977 the Assistant Secretary to the Treasury Lawrence M. Woodworth declared before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. "We view tax treaties as an important element in the international economic policy of the United States, one of our fundamental objectives is to

minimize impediments to free international flows of capital and technology, and this objective is fostered by having the broadest possible network of income tax treaties".

In accordance with that policy the US Government encouraged during the early seventies American companies to use the Netherlands Antilles as a financial route to obtain financing from foreign markets. From then on the off-shore business started to boom. By the beginning of the eighties it had developed into one of the major sources of the country's income.

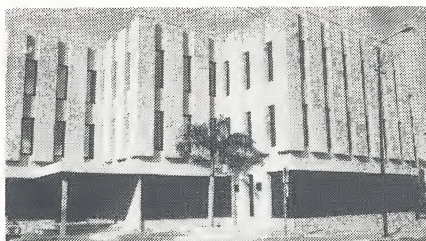
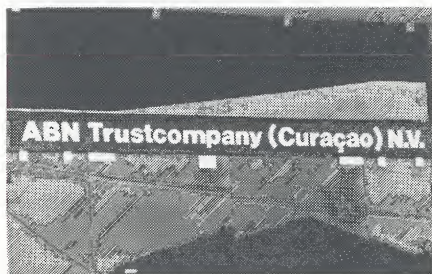
Revenues

True to its age-long history as a foremost centre of trade Curaçao, where most of the off-shore activities are based, rapidly developed the infra-structure required for this type of international business. With generous assistance from the Dutch the telephone and telecommunication facilities were brought up to par, the total investment running well over US\$ 100 million. The island or rather the Federal Government

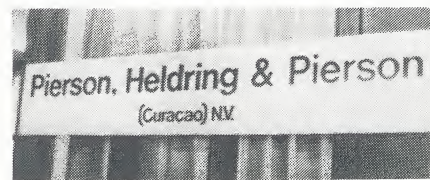
was in due course handsomely repaid. Revenues from this source went up from 2.8 million to 8.2 million in 1969. But between 1970 and 1980 the amount rose steadily and considerably to Naf. 81.6 million in 1979! For 1982 revenues of well over Naf 100 million are expected. Direct tax revenues constitute by now 25-30% of the Federal Government's budget.

It should at this stage be pointed out that the Netherlands Antilles have no natural resources. With the income from the oil-refineries (Aruba and Curaçao) and tourism declining, the loss of the off-shore sector would beyond any doubt cause havoc both economically and socially. For apart from an irreplaceable loss of income the unemployment figure, which on Curaçao runs presently in the high twenties, would reach a catastrophic level. Direct employment provided by the off-shore sector is estimated at 1200 jobs. Assuming a multiplier factor of 3, the total employment generated by the industry can be estimated at 3,600. The labour force on Curaçao is approximately 60,000. Considering, moreover, the Antilles' almost

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total dependence on imports, it is obvious that it will face severe problems if this major generator of foreign exchange would cease to exist.

A revision of the protocol, which would seriously curtail the offshore business as presently conducted on the Netherlands Antilles, would virtually mean disaster.

Treaty-shopping

The revision, which the Department of the Treasury envisages, is exactly of that nature, although not with that implied consequence in mind. One of the major reasons why a renegotiation of the treaty has been proposed, is to put an end to what is called 'treaty-shopping'.

The term refers to the practice of residents of countries that do not have an income tax treaty with the U.S. or that have less favourable treaties to organize a corporation in a country that does have a favourable treaty. Thus they are able to use the treaty-country corporation to invest in the U.S. and profit from the reduced rates of withholding on U.S. dividends, interests, rentals and royalties as arranged by the particular treaty. But, so goes the argument in Washington, a treaty with one country is not a treaty with the rest of the world. Consequently Treasury has proposed to include a re-



Damian Leo

vised form of Article 16 in all new U.S. income tax treaties in order to put an end to treaty-shopping.

The proposal is aimed at corporations in the treaty partner country of which more than 25% percent is owned by non-residents of that country or of which the income is largely passed on to residents of third countries. Considering that Antillean Off-Shore companies are exclusively owned by non residents as enforced by the respective Island Governments' policy with regard to establishment-licences and the tax regulations, inclusion of the proposed article 16 in the treaty would put an end to most of the ongoing business.

White-washing

One of the arguments used by Treasury is that taxhavens or semi-taxhavens like the Netherlands Antilles are being used to whitewash money from dubious origin.

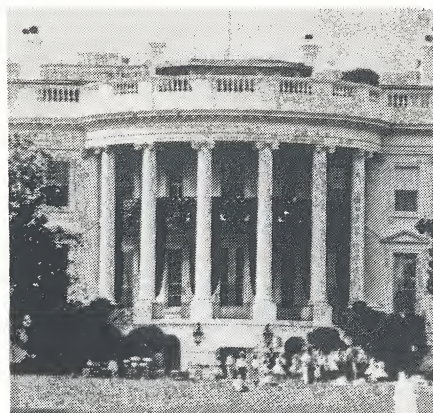
Joel Garreau in his bestseller 'The Nine Nations of North America' mentions in this respect the Netherlands Antilles as an example. According to Garreau this is so because "corporations (in the Antilles) are allowed to maintain complete anonymity. There is no legal way to compel the representatives of corporations domiciled there to reveal who their major stockholders are, or where their money came from, unlike in the United States. Roughly speaking, it's the corporate equivalent of a numbered Swiss bank account". Gar-

reau is wrong, however. To quote Mr. Damian Leo, a recognized financial expert, "it does not seem very likely that the black money circuit of the U.S.A. passes through the Antilles, as the present treaty contains a provision for the exchange of information". In general the trust-companies in the Antilles do take care to safeguard their reputations. At the same time no-one doubts that some measure of whitewashing is going on. The question is, however, whether this happens at such a scale as to warrant the measures proposed by Treasury.

Taxes

Of a more fundamental nature are the objections of Treasury concerning the application of withholding taxes on dividends, interests and royalties. Dividends paid by an American company to its Antillean parent are taxed in general in the USA with 15% instead of the customary 30% withholding tax. According to the treaty the Antillean government should also levy 15%. This is indeed done, but not like in the U.S. on the gross income but rather on the nett income i.e. after deduction of costs including the taxes paid in the USA. Thus it is no exception that in reality only 6% instead of 15% is paid. The same applies to interests and royalties, which if paid to an Antillean company are tax exempt in the U.S. In the Antilles they are taxed according to a rate of 24-30%, but again after deduction of costs.

Will White House stand by C.B.I. ?



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The only exemption which is being considered concerns the so-called finance companies. These are companies established by American firms to gain access to the Eurodollar market. Interests paid to the Antillean lender are tax exempt in the USA, while the Antilles impose a rate of 30% on a 1% spread. If the USA would, however, levy a 30% tax on such interests, this market vital to the American business world would be closed. It is estimated that approximately 35 billion dollars pass through the Antilles for this purpose. It is therefore hardly to be expected that the USA will resort to such a measure with regard to this type of companies. But this does not really offer much hope to the Antilles. The U.S. Congress apparently is considering legislation that will enable U.S. companies to borrow funds directly from the Eurodollar market without having to pay withholding or federal income tax on interest. Such legislation would obviously close down the Antillean route. It should be noted that such a measure will make little to no difference to American firms borrowing on the Eurodollar market, only the economy of the Antilles will be affected.

Consultation

Since Treasury on July 12 of 1979 announced its intention to renegotiate the treaty between the Antilles and the U.S.A. a number of meetings between officials of the two partners have been held during which strong arguments have been forwarded against Treasury's proposed course of action.

An Antillean position paper states with regard to the issue of treaty shopping that 'a treaty is negotiated with a view towards competing tax systems and not to the persons subject thereto', implying that third country nationals should not by definition be excluded as contributors to the free international flow of capital and technology (see above). "If so excluded", the paper states, "the

basic structure and underlying philosophy of a tax treaty network is defeated". The paper, moreover, points out that an analysis of the records of the four largest trust companies in the Antilles, representing 80% of the off-shore business, shows that only 4 percent of the Protocol's beneficiaries could possibly be regarded as abusing the treaty i.e. are third country nationals from non-treaty countries. The paper seems to have a strong and valid argument when it states that "it is unreasonable to disturb an existing protocol and the international flow of capital to effect a questionable policy against a handful".

A recent study by Deloitte Haskins-Sells of U.S. treaty policy urges Treasury 'to reconsider its decision' because it fears that the U.S. economy itself might be seriously affected if the proposed Article 16 was to be included in the tax treaties with other countries. A significant reduction of new foreign investment and a flight of already invested foreign capital are foreseen. It is feared that the article will discourage foreign investors from establishing manufacturing plants, real estate projects, or other job-producing businesses in the United States. Several arguments

are put forward indicating that the inclusion of the article might be counter-productive with regard to U.S. tax revenues. The writers of the paper "know of no authoritative economic studies done by Treasury on whether Article 16 will cause a revenue loss to the U.S., a loss in new foreign portfolio investment in the U.S., an outflow of already invested foreign capital from the U.S., a reduction in the capital pool available to U.S.-owned business, or a reduction in the number of job-producing foreign-owned businesses located in the U.S." Thus also from an American point of view the justification to overturn 42 years of U.S. treaty policy and administrative practice, is seriously being questioned.

Geo-politics

Besides that valid arguments can be raised against the financial policy aspect of Treasury's intention (and apparently a host of technical objections with regard to the proposed formulation of Article 16) there is also a most important political angle to be reckoned with.

As pointed out above the Antilles will suffer a severe economic setback if Treasury gets its way. ♦



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It simply cannot at this stage of its development cope with such a loss of income and employment. Serious social unrest and political upheaval would most certainly result, which in turn might lead to highly undesirable geo-political developments.

The Netherlands Antilles is generally known for its stable government and functioning democracy. As such it is considered a staunch and dependable friend of the free world in an otherwise volatile region. Its strategic position adds to the significance of that reality. But it should be noticed that in recent years so-called revolutionary or — as they prefer to label themselves — progressive groups have become increasingly active. Marxist oriented they are cleverly nestling themselves in youth-organizations, education, trade-unions, political parties and the media. A postillion d'amour has been going on for some time between them and

socialist countries like Cuba and Grenada. And with Surinam, a former partner of the Kingdom of the Netherlands with which there are many ties, rapidly turning to the left, the influence from the communist world will only increase.

Most observers consider these relatively small groups of no immediate threat to society. But in case of serious social unrest, they might well become a force to be reckoned with. There seems little doubt that regional communist powers would help to stir up as much trouble as possible. Nor should there be any doubt about Venezuela's great displeasure and consequent intervening action in that case.

The question then should be raised whether the price the U.S.A. would eventually have to pay will not outweigh the advantages Treasury claims will be gained by renegotiating the treaty.

A claim which in any case is doubtful.

It should also be observed that the proposal of Treasury does not seem to be in tune with President Reagan's much heralded Caribbean Basin Initiative, which aims at strengthening local economies by stimulating private enterprise.

It may therefore be hoped that at the next round of consultations between Washington and the Antilles in October coming, the U.S.A. will approach the subject from a broader concept than the strict financial one. The Antilles on their part have tried their utmost to make Washington aware of the fact that much more is at stake than the issue of possible abuse of the treaty. Indications are that at least at the Department of State there is a growing concern about the broader implications of Treasury's financial policy. ■

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Freedom of expression

by Wim Luiten



Our problems in the political field so completely dominate everything that a discussion on other constitutional problems does not materialize. Especially the basic laws have not received sufficient attention in the last decade.

This is most regrettable, because through this it has not been possible to exercise enough counter-pressure against arbitrary attitudes. It is therefore reason for rejoicing that a number of groups have instituted a lawsuit in connection with the refusal to grant permission to the theatrical group Teatro Foro to perform in the street. All the more so as with this lawsuit they want to bring clarity in a number of fundamental questions that have arisen, because the legislators have failed in the proper exercise of their function. The points put forward in the lawsuit are not trivial.

Colonial ordinance ineffective

In 1933 two ordinances were decreed, regulating the freedom of the press and the right of association and assembly. Both ordinances are still applied, although they have become absolutely obsolete. The ordinance on freedom of the press for example states that of all printed matter copies must be sent to the authorities. Even if one makes a photocopy of something, an extra copy has to be sent to the authorities. Only when the text comes from the

Netherlands, this is not necessary!

The ordinance on association and assembly has in the past already been declared ineffective by the judge, because it is overbroad and contrary to the European Convention on Human Rights. Yet the legislators have remained passive and the administration still applies the ordinance.

General police ordinance ineffective

The general police ordinance of Curaçao, in which limitations are set on the right of assembly is also ineffective, as it is contrary to the constitution. Guaranteeing the basic rights is a concern of the central government and only Central Government Ordinances can make limitations thereon. The insular territories have no authority in this field. Perhaps in a time of decentralization, when the insular character comes first, this principle is not very popular. It is, however, consequent. Maintaining the basic laws is so important that only the highest body, the legislature, is allowed to infringe upon them.

The road to the Judge

A third matter of principle that is being brought up for discussion is the organization of our administration of justice. Although almost all countries in the world have some form of special administration of justice against the government, such a

provision does not exist here. The normal rules concerning the powers of the judge do not apply in this case. For the judge is not being called upon to protect civil rights that can be measured in terms of money, but to guarantee citizenship rights. And whether he is competent to do the latter does not appear in recorded judicial opinion. The legislators up to now have maintained a stony silence in this matter.

It is reason for joy that some discussion on the basic rights is once more beginning to take place. Although it is still regrettable that the developments in legislation are so long overdue that in these important matters one must completely rely on the judge. I hope that when the judge has spoken, the legislators will no longer remain silent. ■

translated from Dutch.

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Once more Law and language

Reply to a letter

It is with great satisfaction that I noticed that in the June/July issue of this review a reaction was printed to an earlier article of mine concerning law and language. As a columnist you try to introduce subjects for public discussion, but most of the time you do not know whether you have succeeded. The fact that an avowed expert like Drs. Richardson has reacted is all the more reason for joy. It is regrettable, however, that in her letter to the editor she scarcely touches upon the subject itself, but mainly tries to discredit the author. She suggests that I have not read the report I was commenting on, or even seen it. My reaction supposedly is based on conservative fear of change, while my attitude towards the Antilles is ambivalent.

Of course it is rather amusing for the readers when someone is made to look like a fool. This after all is a well-known political gimmick. He who makes a laughing stock of his opponent need no longer go into the matter itself. And this is unfortunate, because it is precisely the latter that matters. A few facts for the record. On December 21st I received two documents from the Department of Education for advice, viz. "Aanzet tot regulering van de Antilliaanse taalsituatie" and "Het Hoger Onderwijs". These were referred to as the provisional drafts of two chapters of the report on educational policy to be drawn up by the policy committee. It was not until the final report of the committee was published that I learnt that the text concerning the legal regulation of the language situation was not included therein and that therefore two separate documents were concerned. But at that time the copy had already been sent in. She states further that I did not understand what was in the report. I supposedly disregarded the fact that Dutch would be maintained as official language beside English and Papiamentu and depicted the problem too pessimistically. This point may indeed easily be a cause for

difference of opinion. The "Aanzet" is exceedingly vague on the consequences of introducing English and Papiamentu as official languages. Yet I cannot rid myself of the impression that it is the intention expressed in the note (page 4) that on the Windward Islands the English language will become the language in which legislation and administration of justice will take place and on the Leeward Islands Papiamentu. However I look at it, this cannot but mean that Dutch will disappear as legal language. If Drs. Richardson says that I gave an incorrect interpretation of the facts, I cannot help wondering who it is that is really giving erroneous information. Dutch will be maintained as official language, but will no longer be used at the court!

It is a pity that while holding a plea for the introduction of English and Papiamentu the report in no way makes it clear what the elevation of these languages to an official status will really imply. Does recognition mean that these languages can be used at a sitting of the court? I don't think so, because this is already being done. Or does it mean that laws and judgements will be translated to make them

more accessible? I don't think that this is what the writers of the report have in mind either. The report does not say so explicitly, but its purport is unmistakably that legal formation in the future will be in English and Papiamentu. Besides all kinds of expenses and problems due to small scale (does one really want to make an attempt to draft an English language Code of Commerce, Civil Code, Penal Code and Code of Criminal Procedure for 25,000 Windward Islanders?), a number of matters of principle are also involved here, which should not be dealt with too lightly. I am afraid though that this is exactly what Drs. Richardson is doing.

I reject the opinion that any language can be used in any juridical system. The systematic differences between the continental civil law and the Anglo-Saxon common law are so immense that not even the most elementary concepts like "recht", "jurisprudentie" or "on-rechtmatige daad" can be translated adequately. The English equivalents of these concepts have entirely different meanings in their system. It is an enormous misconception to think that one can have the legal formation done here in English ♦

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and Papiamentu without cutting the ties binding us to the Dutch system of law. The report in fact proposes to somewhat mess around with the language, but I believe this will push us into isolation, which we are sure to regret later on.

If Dutch is indeed a dead language or a ghost language (the report otherwise is written in Dutch!), if indeed a change is necessary in the language strategy; if we have to become more oriented towards the region, at least do it consistently and do not bungle our legal system, because we need the law badly. The situation is disquieting enough as it is. Our tax legislation is antiquated, basic law protection has been strongly neglected, the organization of our administration of justice, especially as regards administrative justice, leaves much to be desired, the civil code has not kept up with the developments of the last deca-

des, our social legislation is inadequate and not able to diminish the unacceptable differences in wealth, our educational legislation is not able to spread opportunities for adequate education to everyone, our economic legislation is not enough to give ample room for new developments, etc. etc. Even in a situation in which there is no lack of clearness in the fundamentals of our juridical system and an adaptation of Dutch legislation to our own situation is relatively easy, this has not been done successfully, because of indolence, lack of cadre and our being held spellbound by political problems. If the fundamentals of our juridical system are going to be meddled with, it does seem to me that there is some reason for worry. In this respect my article was indeed based on fear! ■

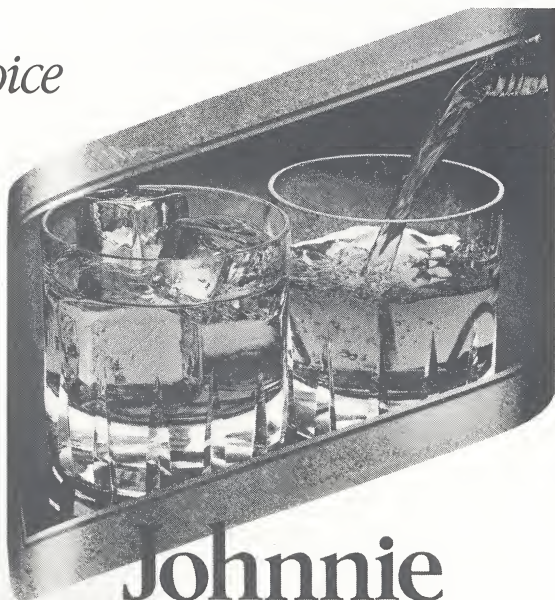
Postscript

With a view to the importance of the subject AR gladly published the ensuing correspondence with the editor. We hereby inform our readers that the discussion is closed. We also draw their attention that in accordance with AR's editorial policy letters to the editor should be brief and concise. AR reserves the right to abbreviate or to refuse publication of any such letters.

The Editor

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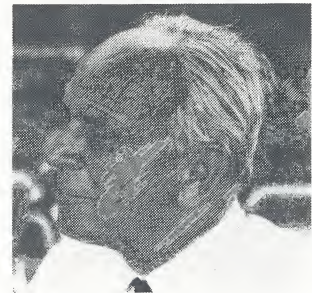


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The Code of Medical Ethics

Fostering awareness of patients' rights



Mr. J. Haring

The medical profession is often regarded as the last "class of untouchables" in modern society. When serious mistakes are suspected or unethical behaviour experienced, few see the use of filing a complaint. The myth abounds that the profession will always cover up the shortcomings of its members. A myth indeed, largely kept alive by widespread ignorance in particular with respect to the appropriate legislation.

As the government has recently embarked on a programme to bring up to date public health legislation, A.R. asked Mr. J. Haring to supply its readers with the basic information and where necessary give a critique of the matter on hand. Mr. J. Haring (60) has been added to the Department of Public Health as a legal adviser for the period of two years in the framework of the Dutch programme for technical assistance to the Netherlands Antilles. In the next issue Mr. Haring will enlarge on the information given underneath and add some personal opinions. It should be noted that Mr. Haring confines himself to the code of medical ethics.

Protection

The function of the code of medical ethics is to guarantee the quality of professional performance. The standard of public health services is to a considerable degree determined by the quality of those who supply these services. In order to maintain an acceptable level it is not only necessary to make high demands on the training of but to set high ethical standards for the medical profession. For he who needs medical care must be certain that the one he entrusts himself to — and usually he has little choice in this respect — will have the required expertise and conscientiousness.

Rarely is a patient able to determine the nature of his ailment nor what may happen to him. He is in no position, moreover, to pass judgement on the expertness of the medical professional. It is therefore of primary importance that such judgement, backed by the required expertise, is available. Thus the aspect of patient-protection plays an important role.

Criteria

The code of medical ethics is to be found in legislation (Landsverordening, P.B. 1957, no. 30) passed on the 4th of March, 1957. It applies to physicians, dentists, midwives and pharmaceutical chemists. It should be noted that all professional functions are included and not just those involved with direct patient care.

The criteria of the code read as follows:

- to be found guilty of actions undermining trust in the profession;
- negligence which causes harm to a person on whose behalf medical, dental or obstetric counsel or assistance has been asked or to whom that counsel or assistance has been given.
- evidence of profound ignorance in the execution of the profession.

Of these offences the first one is committed most frequently: insufficient care for the patient, refusal to help or assist a patient, the use of inadmissible language before a patient and licentious behaviour.

Measures

Article 7 of the aforementioned legislation allows in these cases for the following measures to be taken:

- a warning
- a severe reprimand
- a fine not exceeding NAf 10,000.—
- suspension from the medical or pharmaceutical profession with a maximum of one year.
- removal from the register (for life).

The law, moreover, states that the ethical committee, which is installed to pass judgement, is allowed to

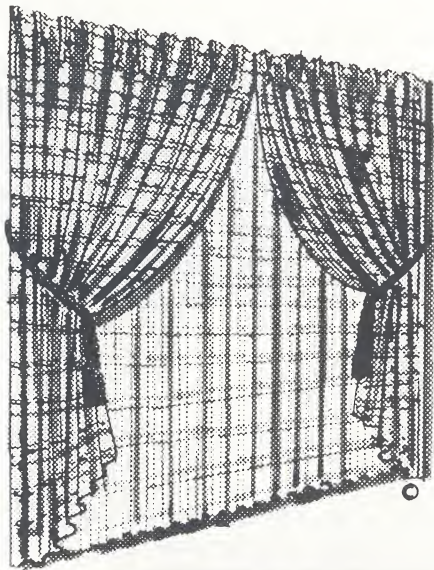
publish decisions, if it considers such action to be in the public interest. The fact that this step is rarely taken may be the cause of the widespread doubt concerning the effectiveness of the ethical code.

Procedure

The ethical committee can only concern itself with a case if a legitimate complaint has been filed. In other words it is not entitled to investigate a possible offence on its own authority. Qualified to raise a complaint are:

- a. a directly interested party
- b. a person or body charged by the authorities with the inspection of public health.
- c. the board of an organization by which the physician, dentist, midwife or chemist is employed or registered.

The law does not define who can be considered 'a directly interested party.' It only states that the person who files a complaint should give a clear indication of this or her interest in the case. Thus it can be the patient himself, his legal counsel or even close relatives if they have the patient's permission. The second category has given cause to much discussion. It entitles for example the director of the Department of Public Health to start legal (disciplinary) procedures even in the case when a rumor of a possible offence reaches him. Opinions differ, however, whether he should indeed make use of this prerogative. In the next issue of A.R. this and other fundamental issues will be discussed in depth. In an era in which there is a growing awareness of the rights of every individual citizen, it seems appropriate first of all to acknowledge that in this particular instance his rights are recognized by the law and thereby to de-mythologise some concepts which are certainly not in the public interest. ■



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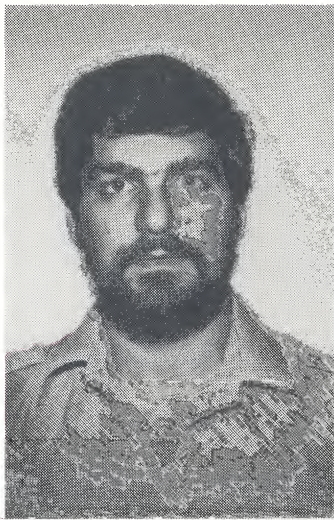
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PEOPLE

No-one wondered at the huge crowd of well-wishers attending the marriage of **Robert Voges** (28) and **Sandra Rómer** (21) late July. Both are very popular amongst their friends, many of whom like Robert are enraptured by baseball. Moreover Robert and Sandra's fathers are men of most distinguished careers, serving their country in a variety of capacities at the highest level. The couple left the animated reception at the picturesque mansion Brievengat, a historical monument, to fly to Italy for their honeymoon. But not before the bride had delighted everyone by kissing her 500 guests on both cheeks.



of the wellknown politician, holds a B.Sc and a Masters in Biochemistry besides having passed the tests of the National Board of Examination (USA) in dentistry. Mr. And Mrs. Elhage (3 children) plan to move back to Curaçao soon.

does to the life of precious stones. Rubies and emeralds really come to life here. Sapphire on the other hand doesn't come out too strong. Rinus, who graduated in German and History of Arts before training for his present profession, is always searching for the unique. Reason why he keeps coming back?

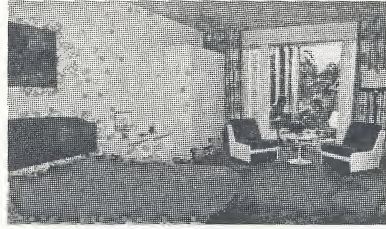
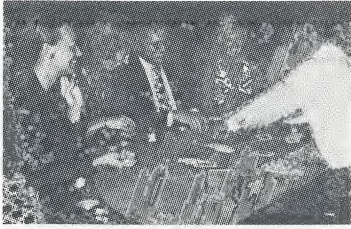
After a brilliant career as a student both at Springfield(Mass) and Pto. Rico's university of medical science Rio Piedras, **Mr. Ricardo Elhage**(29) recently qualified before a committee of the Dept. of Health as a dentist. Mr. ELhage, son and namesake

Seen all over the Antilles late July and early August was dashing Amsterdam jeweller **Rinus Beukema** (36). Not to buy or sell but to be inspired by 'your beautiful people and exciting colours'. Even at his third visit Beukema keeps marveling at what the light on the islands



An exceptional work of tapestry designed after a painting by increasingly famous Gerrit van 't Net (Dutch painter 1910-1971) will be on display at the Curaçao Museum September coming. The colours come remarkably close to those of the original painting. To achieve this Annie van den Berg who weaved the work of art, choose from no less than 500 recipes for dyeing wool. Mrs. van den Berg lives and works in Amsterdam and looks forward to this first exhibition of her work in Curaçao.

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The port of Miami always offers a beautiful sight, especially during the weekends when the cruise vessels are lined up and ready to plunge into the Caribbean waters. A few years ago the majority of these ships left with nearly all berths sold and a company such as "Royal Caribbean" even had a long waiting list. But new companies arrived in Miami and when the former flagship of the French, the beautiful "France", was purchased and renamed "Norway" the number of berths for sale increased to a rather unhealthy level. Shortly afterwards the recession hit the U.S.A.!

In the deregulated airline-business airline fares became so attractive that people who were considering a cruise felt they could not miss the opportunity to go to Hawaii, Mexico etc.

Cruise-companies operating out of San Juan such as "Costa", "Chandris" and "Cunard" had the advantage that they were much closer to the ports to be visited, but at the same time were at disadvantage, because they had to fly their passengers all the way to San Juan instead of Miami.

The cruise companies started to make deals with airlines to fly the passengers from all cities in the USA to Miami or San Juan at special discount fares that were included in the cruise fares published for the Westcoast, Midwest etc.

This worked very well, but in the meantime the number of ships operating out of Los Angeles, San Francisco and Vancouver increased and although they were not all 'love-boats' the competition between Eastcoast and Westcoast cruises became tougher and tougher.

And then all of a sudden a company operating out of Miami could no longer reach the minimum number of people required and started offering "**free air transportation**" first from a selected number of cities and later even from the Westcoast.

Other cruise companies watched this trend with apprehension. Meanwhile the airlines had to increase their fares and were not in for anymore rockbottom deals. Consequently cruise fares including the secret airfares had to be increased instead of decreased.

Gradually almost all companies had to follow the concept of "**free air**" especially in the off-season to keep their share in the market.

And that in turn caused another uproar, especially in Florida, where prospective cruise passengers got the feeling that they, not needing any air transportation, were subsidizing cruise passengers from other parts in the USA. This in turn

brought heavy discounting on cruise fares in the Florida market.

Affecting the Neth. Antilles

Cruise companies are now trying desperately to move cruise ships to other ports such as Tampa, New Orleans and Galveston(Houston) and it is obvious that the itineraries of these vessels will include ports in Mexico and maybe Jamaica but certainly not the ABC-islands.

The consequence: less calls here!

There is a tendency to consider cruises as "in between" vacations and not as "the annual holidays" and this forces the companies to shift to shorter cruises. Because the ABC-islands are so far from Miami they obviously do not appear in the itinerary of 7 day cruise programmes.

The consequence less calls here!

Only a few companies operating out of Florida decided to maintain a limited number of 14 day cruises in the Caribbean and we are most fortunate that Curaçao and/or Aruba are included in these itineraries.

The consequence only 2 or 3 calls per month.

Fortunately we are still on the route between the USA and the Panama Canal and lucky enough to be included in the cruise programmes of the few lines operating between California and Florida.

Our islands, however, are now most definitely linked to cruises starting in San Juan and it is most likely that this pattern is going to remain for the years to come.

Tourism now or never.

In the recently published report presented by a study group to Mr. Agustin Diaz, the now ex-commissioner of Tourism in Curaçao, there are signs of optimism concerning the development of cruise tourism for Curaçao.

A.R. does not share this optimism.

The companies operating out of San Juan are not directing their marketing activities to people in the higher income brackets. A closer analysis would reveal that their passengers usually are tourists who would normally stay in tourist-class hotels. They like to have a good time on board but are certainly not the "buyers" our shopkeepers like to welcome with the red carpet all laid out.

The same goes for European groups joining these vessels in San Juan or in Guadeloupe/Martinique. They also are "average" tourists and not buyers of luxury goods in our shops.

Base-port.

In the above mentioned report it is also suggested that Curaçao should develop a cruise terminal to make it attractive for cruise companies to use our harbour as home-port.

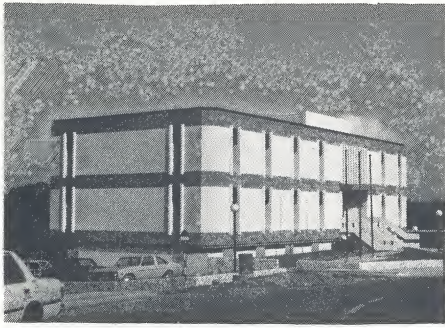
In 1981 the 'Sun Line' started an experiment to make Curaçao a port of turnaround, flying in the passengers to join the vessel here and at the same time disembarking cruise passengers to be flown home with the same aircraft.

Although this type of (turnaround) operation brings additional activity, it does not justify a cruise terminal of the shape and size as in homeports such as Miami or San Juan. A cruise company planning turnaround-moves will ask for quick dispatch of passengers and baggage between the vessel and the airport with the least possible formalities of immigration and customs.

The above is a realistic picture of the cruise business of today and tomorrow. There is of course no question about it that it is still important for our economy to get as many vessels in our port as possible.

Cruise companies will still lend a willing ear when we show them our port facilities. However, the entire market situation simply requires a different approach. When our islands fit into their itineraries they will come, but even if we would offer bunkeroil at a 50% discount, they will not come if our ports do not fit into 7 day cruises from any port on the US mainland.

Cruise companies will require ports where people can spend a day enjoying themselves with shopping as just an additional attraction. They will want to know what facilities we have in the fields of sports and entertainment. This does indicate the necessity of a completely different approach . . . We also have to get used to the fact that there are cruise passengers who want to walk to the city to save the taxi fare, to mention one more example. Times do change! ■

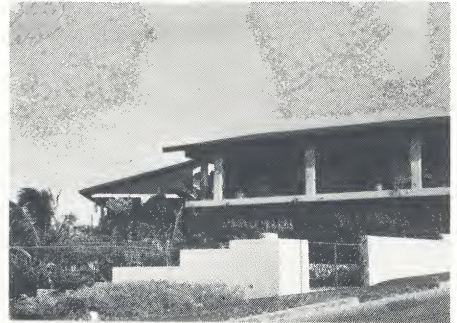


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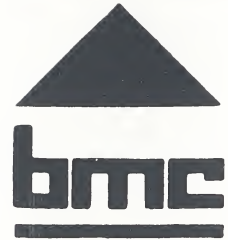


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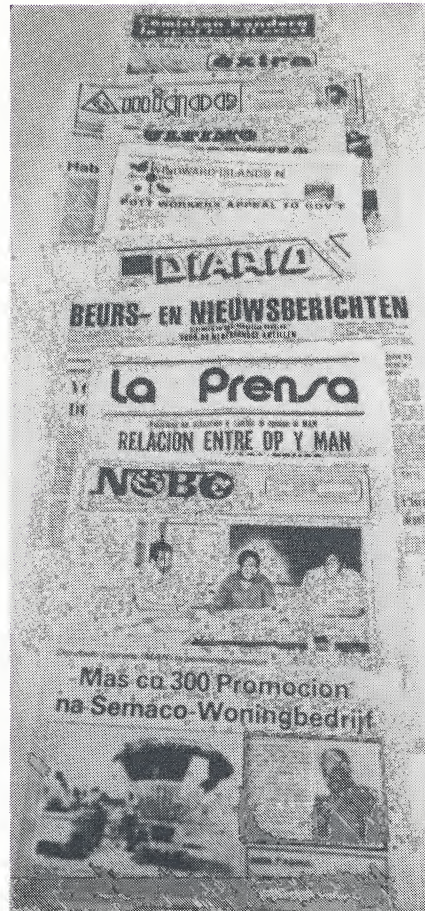
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Paper boom may not be such a blessing

All over the world papers are dying. Not so in the Netherlands Antilles, which witnessed the birth of four newspapers in ten years. Only one did not survive. On August 2, 1982, yet another paper appeared on the streets, bringing the total of daily newspapers in the country (population 250,000) up to eight! A remarkable development, which does give reason for concern, however, as the price for such a plurality may well be a further loss of quality.

The paper boom during the past ten years in the Antilles is not without its logic. After the 1969 upheavels the process of emancipation accelerated and the local language, Papiamentu, began to receive more and more recognition. Only one out of the three papers appearing in the early seventies was published in that language. A second evening-paper (Nobo) and a morning-paper (Extra) using the people's language soon began appearing. They became an instant success and are today firmly established in the market. Both tabloids directed themselves primarily to the man in the street. Large headlines, juicy stories and sensational pictures assured their publishers of relatively large readerships. Extra continued in this vein and is still the most popular paper in the country. Editorial policy at Nobo has changed slightly over the years with a preference for more in depth information.

The growing independence movement on Aruba could not but also lead to the birth of an Aruban paper. It should be noticed that all the papers up till a few years ago were published in Curaçao, even though most of them did have editorial staffs in Aruba. Understandably the 'Diario' a morning paper in Papiamentu mirrored the



Aruban point of view from its beginning. It did not, however, strive for quality. Consequently it only captured a limited part of the market. The more serious evening papers arriving daily from Curaçao still carry more weight with the Aruban public.

A third reason explaining the explosion of dailies in the Antilles is the pre-eminence given to politics. Although all papers claim to be independent from political parties, several are at least with regard to political philosophy linked up. Motives of this nature did and do play a role, although never admitted, in starting up a new paper. In a number of cases the commercial angle also played a part. Curiously

enough publishing of a paper is still believed by many to be a most profitable business.

So many papers competing on such a small market does in fact not leave much room for profit-making. Circulation of all the papers, except Extra, stays well below 10,000. Moreover distribution on the islands is a costly affair as distances, roads and climate make it impossible to use the traditional paper-boy, delivering by foot or bicycle. Transport between the islands also adds to the staggering costs of getting the paper to its reader. With a disproportional number of radio stations and TV competing for the favour of the same limited number of advertisers, it is plain that income from this source will be likewise restricted.

As a result all papers economize on staff. Background information, in-depth analysis of news either local or international, diversity of sections etc. is virtually not to be found in Antillean papers. The generally low wages do not make the journalistic profession attractive. What quality is still to be found in one or two of the papers, is due to an admirable amount of enthusiasm of but a few.

The demand for better newspapers, on the other hand, is getting louder. Antillean society is emancipating rapidly. The birth of another paper therefore cannot be applauded as a positive development. On the contrary the situation asks for fewer but better newspapers. All one can hope for is that the fierce competition on the open market will force publishers to mergers thereby creating the possibilities of improving their product. Co-operation in production and distribution was started a number of years ago, but the Association of Antillean Newspaper publishers has unfortunately not taken any initiative as yet with regard to finding ways of improving editorial quality. Thus it seems fair to conclude that the information industry, at least the newspapers, is running behind the general trend in Antillean society.



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Ernesto Rosenstand and the Aruban Theatre

From the Indian past to a socially conscious present

by Wim Rutgers

Traditionally literature is classified in three genres, lyrics, epics and drama's. Theatre therefore as a matter of course is part of literature and the history of theatre is part of the history of literature. But when leafing through the synopses of Antillean literature like "Di Nos Autonom" and "Met eigen stem" we soon notice that even though the authors may indeed believe that theatre belongs thereto — if only barely —, they deal with it rather superficially.

Cola Debrot in "Cultural Mozaïk" did not pay too much attention to the history of the theatre either. The "Encyclopedia of the Netherlands Antilles" is a happy exception, but for the rest theatre is treated in a rather stepmotherly fashion in our literary reviews. This is in fact surprising, because the genre enjoys a lively interest in the Netherlands Antilles, both in an active sense taking into account the considerable number of theatrical groups and players, and in a passive sense seeing the audiences who again and again provide full houses. A volume of poetry at best is bought by a couple of hundreds of people. A new play on the other hand will always attract a few thousands. In addition theatre seems to be one of the more democratic art forms, which not only the elite enjoy. The variety in repertory presented by the different groups ensures a very wide interest.

Whereas novels are mostly written in Curaçao, theatre takes place on all the islands. Each island has its own group, which was once more evident during the interinsular drama festival held in Aruba. Moreover international drama festivals were held in that island twice. Festivals for children's theatre, again in Aruba, enjoy high popularity both in the schools and in several community centre groups.

International

The Antillean theatre has often

had recourse to experts from outside the islands, by for example engaging directors through the Sticusa. Local professional directors such as Edsel Samson, Pacheco Domacassé and the Aruban Burny Every have also been active. What is offered by the theatre has a strongly international orientation through translations and adaptation of works belonging to world literature both from the past and the present. Molière, Shaw, Shakespeare, Sophocles, medieval legends and miracle-plays, as well as well-known Spanish works are translated into Papiamentu and presented.

According to Dr. J. Hartog theatre in Curaçao dates far back and existed even before the traditionary novels and poems. As early as 1821 a number of Jewish Curaçaoenes formed a theatrical club "Liefhebbery Komodie", which brought plays in "Nederdeutsch" (Dutch)



Ernesto Rosenstand

and French. In 1830 there is supposed to have been a kind of playhouse, although it was not until 1871 that the well-known Teatro Naar opened its doors. In the nineteenth century mostly Spanish plays were produced, followed in the twentieth century by those in Dutch and Papiamentu.

Neglect

The theatre has no doubt contributed in no small measure to furthering the appreciation for the own mother tongue.

In his book *Aruba Hartog* mentions that the theatrical company "De Dietsche Speler" visited Aruba in 1933. Wagenaar criss-crossed the island with them as a guide, he continues, but he gives no information whatsoever on any of their performances. W. F. M. Lampe tells in "Buiten de Schaduw van de Gouverneur" that shortly after 1900 the teacher J. H. P. Schrills formed a theatrical club, consisting of pupils of the Julianaschool. His successor E. R. Goilo carried on this work under the name "Tooneelvereniging Prinses Juliana", which for a short period booked a lot of success. But he gives no details on the plays themselves. All these examples show that the theatre has been unjustifiably neglected in the framework of the history of literature. In this context more attention will have to be paid to it in the future.

Sparse

One of the persons who has for a long time been active in the theatre in Aruba is Ernesto E. Rosenstand. He was and still is involved as an actor, a translator and an author ♦

of original plays. He personifies part of the history of Aruban theatre and yet he is not mentioned in the "Schrijvers Prentenboek" nor in "Met eigen Stem". Jules de Palm writes in "De Antilliaanse literatuur op weg naar volwassenheid?": The Aruban theatrical group Mascaruba has made history on January 7, 1952, by presenting in Coro, Venezuela a play in Papiamentu called Macuarima written by Ernesto E. Rosenstand. A play, which just like the play Tula in Curaçao has an historical base. In the case of Macuarima this is the conquest of the Antilles by the Spaniards. In doing so he mentions only one of the many plays written by Rosenstand. The literary review "Watapana" does give a description of the visit to Venezuela, but the data on Rosenstand are sparse, reason why we had an interview with him on his theatrical work.

Beginning

Ernesto Rosenstand has been involved in the theatre in Aruba since the early fifties. When the first scholarship students returned from the Netherlands they started to stimulate the cultural awareness of the population via discussion groups and several other activities. One of the means employed was the theatre. Under the direction of Sim Frank they presented under the name "Centro Apostolico Arubano" the religious play "Bo Felicidad Ta Serka Mi", an adaptation by Rosenstand of the medieval "Beatrijs legend", as well as other mostly edifying drama's. A translation of Charles Dickens' "Christmas Carols" and Hubert Booi's "Golgotha" were produced towards the end of the fifties. The original play "Un Anochi di Pascu", written much later by Ernesto Rosenstand must also be seen in the context of this tradition.

Training

In Santa Cruz the "Grupo Artistico Di Santa Cruz", a group of female teachers working with the

nuns, were enthusiastically doing theatrical work. They used the production of plays, mainly of the lighter genre, to obtain funds for social-educational projects.

After this initial period we get the years when Dutch directors were sent to the Antilles to help build up theatrical activities. In the late fifties came Henk van Ulsen, who although stationed in Curaçao, was also active in Aruba. In that same period Jules de Palm worked here for the Department of Education. The St. Thomasbond of Catholic Teachers at that time took it upon itself to stage the medieval miracle-play "Mariken van Niemegehen" in a Papiamentu version called "Maria di Ser'i Noka". Later this play was presented in Curaçao as "Marie die Malpais", an adaptation by Raul Römer. A Dutch director who according to Rosenstand did a lot for the Aruban theatre was Piet Kamerman, who together with his wife Elly managed to direct four plays (two in Papiamentu, one in Dutch and one in English) and realise their production.

The theatrical group in which Rosenstand was also active called itself "Studio Comediantes". In 1961 the well-known group "Mascaruba" was formed. Peter Holland at that time was employed by the Cultural Centre Aruba (C.C.A.). For a good many years Ernesto worked as a performer and translator for this group. In the first play "Veneno Sabroso" he already had a small part. The last play he translated for Mascaruba was "No mata bo kurpa, ta primavera" in 1978. Rosenstand considers translating a trainingschool for mastering the art of play-writing.

Identity

Under Dolf de Vries' management Rosenstand's first original play was produced in the early seventies. This was the play "Macuarima", which portrayed how the Spanish arrived and proceeded to disrupt and destroy the indigenous Indian community.

Their thirst for gold and zeal to

disseminate the true creed went hand in hand. To this end the venerable Indian Macuarima had to be sacrificed together with his men. Rosenstand insists that the events that took place in Curaçao on and around May 30, 1969, were of influence on his development as an author. The crisis in which the country then found itself gave rise to a search for one's own identity. During these years he met Pacheco Domacassé in Curaçao. Just like the latter used the freedom-fighter Tula for conscientization of the Curaçao past, so Rosenstand fell back on the independent Indians for the Aruban past. The exchange that Rosenstand wanted to see realised with these two plays never took place, which is still regretted by Rosenstand. The original play performed at the occasion of the celebration of the fifteenth anniversary of Mascaruba, the musical "Wadirikiri", also shows an episode of the Indian past. The love Wadirikiri, Macuarima's daughter, feels for Pluma Blanco, who is from the mainland, is described in poetical language. Neither treason nor lies will ultimately stand in the way of this love. We find the poems written for this musical again in the volume "Un Anhelu Sin Fin", published by Rosenstand in 1982. In this connection we must also mention the play "Kibaima" by Hubert Booi, referred to before, because this play also is based on the Indian past.

These Aruban plays are closely related to the overall Caribbean trend of "Indigenism" or "Indianism", which glorifies the peaceful and cheerful Indian life, which was cruelly disrupted by the arrival of the Europeans. It describes in a romantic way their own past and the earliest ancestors. According to Rosenstand this is not done consciously, but is a result of our falling back on our own history to help solve the identity-crisis. The plays dealing with the Indian past have their origin in the stories written by Rosenstand for the children's programme of Radio Kelkboom. Initially he used translations, ♦

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but later on he wrote original Aruban work. These have been collected in the well-known volume "Kuentanan Rubiano" and "Kuentanan pa un i tur".

Ancestry

Rosenstand tells us that he himself is a man of two cultures, which has given him more insight into this phenomenon. He was born and raised in Santa Martha, Colombia, in the same region as the famous author Gabriel Garcia Marquez, and where the United Fruit Company had its large plantations. His ancestors are Europeans from Germany and Denmark, while his father was a Cuban. This European-Spanish heritage is now blended with a life spent in the shadow of a large American multinational, where his father was employed as a maintenance man for the railroads. In this connection he mentions the strikes in the thirties, which were bloodily suppressed and in which "re-

volutionary" farmers were shot down in large numbers. These events are described in Marquez's "Cien años de soledad". They made Rosenstand very aware of social relations and abuse. This can be clearly seen in his original dramatic work, in which at a certain moment there is a clear turnabout.

The more poetical and romantic is replaced by social problems and commitment. This change is accompanied by a different view of the theatre, which Rosenstand wanted to see realised. When this proves to be impossible with the group Mascaruba, he decides to form the "Teatro Experimental Arubano". This takes place in 1978. With this group he has up to now produced three original and one translated play. During the second international drama festival in 1978 the one-acter "Alameda" was performed successfully. A year later he presented the play "Pa nan por ta Nan" at the interinsular Antillean theatre festival. After the

translation of Enrique Buenaventura's "Na man drechi di Dios Tata" came the first full length original play "Kiko ta di nos?" (May 1983).

Orientation

In these works the theme is socially oriented. A lot of attention is paid to human beings and the dregs of humanity, like drunks and prostitutes, the feeble-minded and poverty. His sympathy lies with the underdog, who is defended against the members of the respectable bourgeoisie, which is very quickly inclined to condemn and never makes an attempt to find out what it is in society that causes people to derail.

The form the play will finally take is arrived at in consultation with the players of the group. The group, consisting of about twenty members, discusses in its totality the theme of a new play and works out several parts in an improvisatory way. Rosen-

LITERATURE

stand's task as an author is to register and advise until a definitive text is ready after consultation and democratic voting procedures. Only then is the play presented.

Besides theatre for adults Rosenstand writes for the children's acting club "Chi cu Cha". Here also he attempts to work in the same manner.

In this way Ernesto Rosenstand tries to give his translations and original work a proper form for the Aruban theatre.

In doing so he is not isolated, for on study trips to Colombia and Belgium he has oriented himself about this modern experimental and improvisatory form of theatre. One of his ideals is a proper form of theatre linked to the international theatrical trends. He is aware of the fact that he has to work with amateurs, because professional theatre for the time being is out of the question.

A new initiative of his is to publish the plays so that they will not be lost, but preserved after the performance. If this had been done before a large part of our theatrical history would have been a lot easier to recover than it is now. ■

translated from Dutch

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Willemstad, Curaçao. 75 pages. English.

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The Hague, Holland. 172 pages. Dutch.

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R. Lina and A. Lammers.

Guide for diving around Bonaire. NAf 12.50. Dutch.

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Published by the Department of Economic Affairs. 35 pages. English.

Available at the section 'export-promotion' of the Dept. of Economic Affairs, Curaçao.

Nancho Kapitein.

Diana Lebacs

Fourth and last volume of a series of children books on the life of Nancho. The book recounts several actual happenings which took place on Bonaire and Curaçao in the period 1865-1968.

Published by Leopold B.V., The Hague, 1982. Dutch.

Available in all bookstores.

Recipes from the Jewish Kitchen of Curaçao.

Published by the Sisterhood Board of Mikveh Israel-Emanuel.

Contains traditional recipes for the daily kitchen and special holidays. Illustrated by Marsha Moron, Miles Pinedo and Obra di Man.

Printed by the Curaçaosche Courant N.V., February 1982. NAf 12.50. English.

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Curaçao 1977. ■



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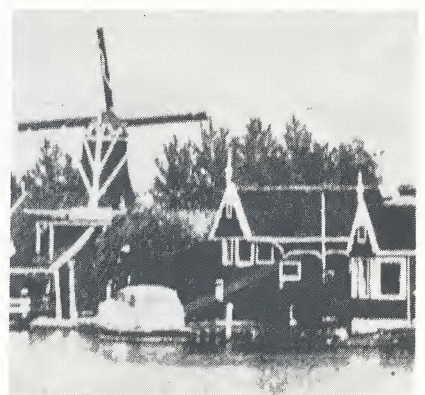
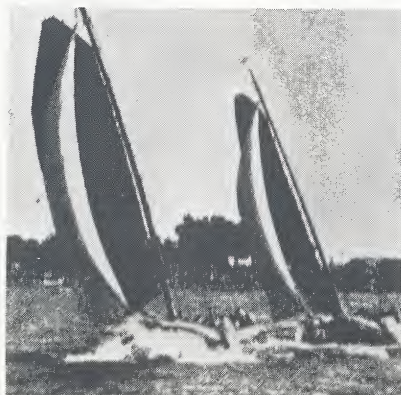
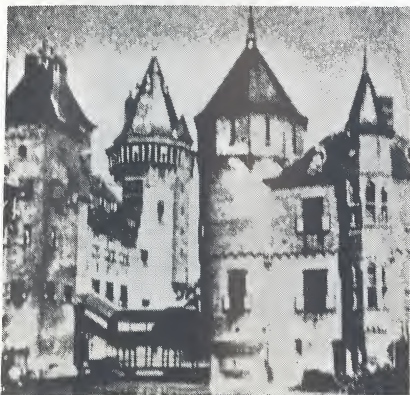


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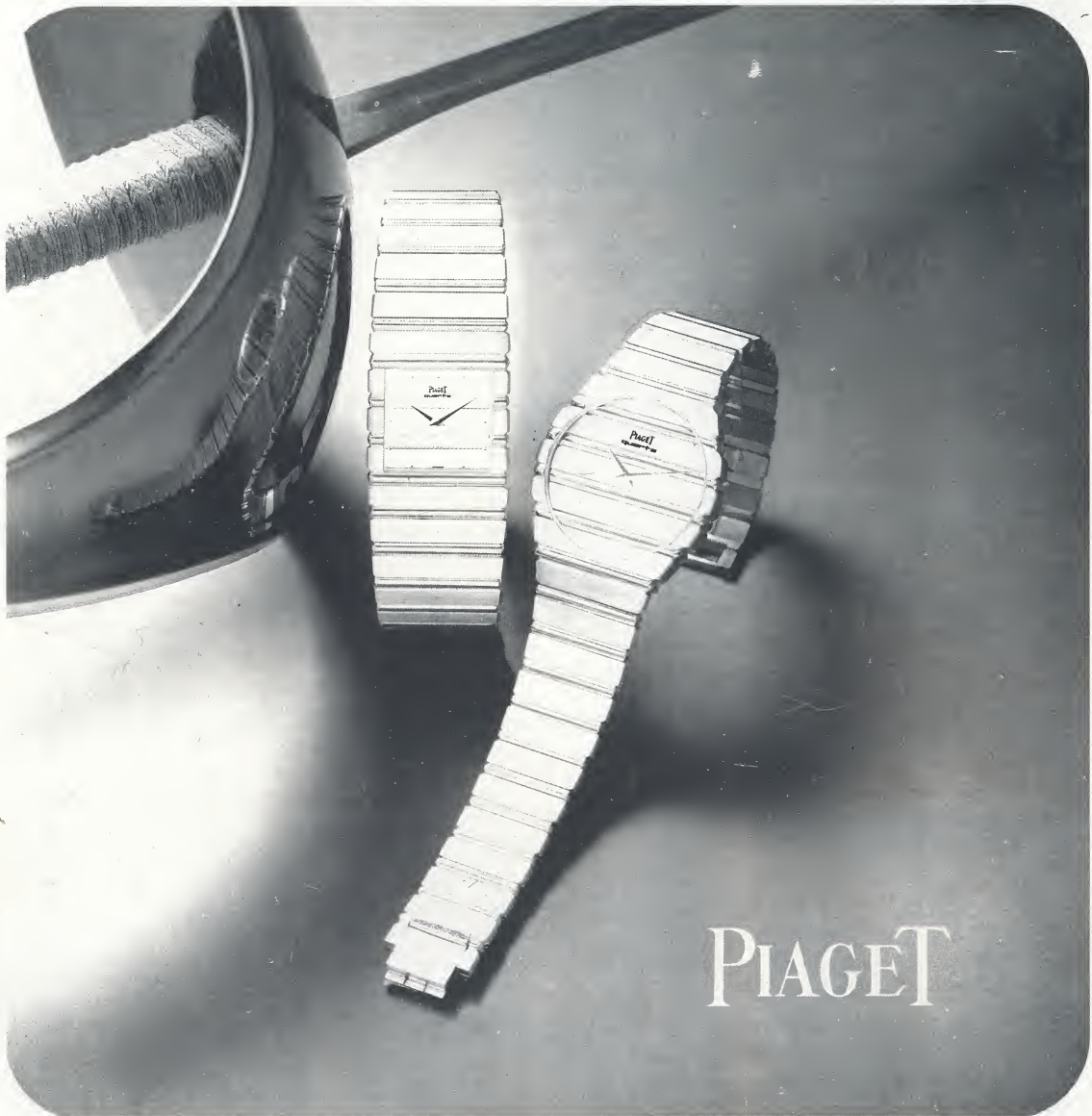
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